To Phillip Frith
with his father's love.

FURTHER

REMINISCENCES.

BY

W. P. FRITH, R.A.,

CHEVALIER OF THE LEGION OF HONOUR AND OF THE ORDER OF LEOPOLD; MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF BELGIUM, AND OF THE ACADEMIES OF STOCKHOLM, VIENNA, AND ANTWERP.

"The pencil speaks the tongue of every land."
DRYDEN.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON,
Publishers in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen.
1888.

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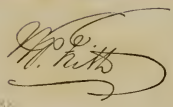

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MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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AND REMINISCENCES.

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VOL. III.

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TO

MY SISTER,

WITHOUT WHOSE LOVING CARE OF MY EARLY LETTERS
THIS VOLUME WOULD HAVE SUFFERED,

I Dedicate

THESE FURTHER REMINISCENCES

WITH TRUE AFFECTION.

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ERRATA.

Page 33, line 28, *for* "nought," *read* "nowt."
Page 79, line 6, *for* "1837," *read* "1838."
Page 361, line 1, *for* "Mr. Lilie, R.A.," *read* "Mr. Leslie, R.A."

MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

AND

REMINISCENCES.

VOLUME THREE.

INTRODUCTION.

It is long since I read Judge Haliburton's story of "Sam Slick, the Clockmaker," whose smart Yankee sayings were often in the mouths of his English admirers some forty or fifty years ago. If I remember rightly, the Clockmaker made a voyage to England, and found himself, the ship, and passengers, becalmed in mid-Atlantic. I think there were no steamers in those days, or if those vessels made their rapid passages, they found no favour with Sam, who preferred a sailing-ship. Amusement on board ship is always a somewhat difficult matter. Time hangs heavily enough when wind and tide are favourable, and the passenger has the consolation of feeling that every hour that passes so slowly brings him nearer to his journey's end; but a calm that may last for days! not a puff of wind responds to the seamen's whistling,

not a ripple disturbs the placid surface of the sea. On the occasion I speak of, the pleasures of whist seemed exhausted, books fell from the hands of wearied readers — what was to be done? A passenger appeared on deck with a rifle in one hand and a bottle in the other. More guns were produced, and a party of gentlemen prepared for sport. The Clockmaker looked on. The black bottle was securely corked, and after being thrown into the sea, was allowed to drift slowly away to a prescribed distance, when one of the gunners fired at it unsuccessfully, for his ball was observed to strike the water at some distance ahead of the bottle; several other sportsmen followed suit with no better success, to their own discomfiture and the loudly-expressed contempt of the Clockmaker.

"Here, you sir," said one of the passengers, "suppose you try, as you seem to think hitting that bottle such an easy matter."

Now Sam Slick had never fired a gun in his life, and his request to have it properly prepared, and even cocked for him, was looked upon as a piece of Yankee impertinence.

"That bottle is farther off than it was," said the Clockmaker. As he spoke, he raised his piece, looked at his mark, shut his eyes, and fired. When he opened them, the bottle had disappeared, knocked into fragments by the hero of the hour. With a smile of conscious superiority, Sam resigned the weapon into the hands of a passenger, who immediately offered to back the Yankee against the field

for any amount agreeable to the rest. His offer was accepted, other bets were freely made; a rifle was prepared, and offered to the Clockmaker.

"Well, no," said Sam; "gambling is against my principles. I have just made a hit; I might make a miss next try, I calculate, so I intend to repose upon my laurels."

Dear reader (I may call you so, for great numbers of you have been very dear to me during the publication of my "Reminiscences"), I am in the position of Sam Slick. I have made a hit, and in the following pages I may probably "miss next try," and thus prove, to my own discomfiture, the wisdom of the Clockmaker's resolve.

Some men's lives bristle with surprises; I have had my share, but never in the course of what may be called a long life have I experienced anything like the astonishment created in me by the success of my autobiography. Hearing somehow or other that I was contemplating such a performance, a well-known publisher wrote to me, offering what seemed to me a fabulous sum of money for a book still in the air, for not a word had been written when the offer was accepted. I might not have been able to express myself intelligibly, much less grammatically, when the bold publisher took upon himself a risk which, I am thankful to say, has been justified by its results. I am not sure that my success would have brought about another "try," if I had not been urged to it so frequently by my readers, many of whom in letters (extracts from which my modesty prevents me repro-

ducing) have placed themselves in the position of Oliver Twist, and "asked for more."

I take this opportunity of thanking all those who have joined in a chorus of praise which has been "honey and cream" to me. One gentleman—or was it a lady?—criticised me anonymously. If I could discover my assailant, I would thank him also, for, after all, I am rather inclined to agree with him when he says, "Frith's autobiography is a poor, gossipy book, garrulous, and silly enough. In people he has known he mentions names that he should have omitted, and leaves out others" (this gentleman's, perhaps) "that should have had places," and so on. He then proceeds to a long personal attack on a very eminent man, whose name very properly appears, against whom my anonymous friend evidently cherishes undying hatred.

I now come to my critics in the public press, to whom I consider I owe a deep debt of gratitude. I began to think I am a judge of style and the rest of that which goes to make good literary handiwork, and I confess I think that when the critic is dealing with matter of which his own pursuits make him a competent judge, his mode of expression is far more satisfactory than it is when he criticises pictures of the qualities of which in all probability he knows nothing at all. I have been called over the coals a good deal for the freedom of my expression regarding the incompetence of art critics. I could multiply instance after instance in proof of it, but that is needless, for the critics are for ever supplying the

proofs themselves. Hazlitt abused Reynolds. Horace Walpole said Hogarth was no painter, but a master of comedy with a pencil. Ruskin's works bristle with errors; one of his notable ones was his saying, on the discovery of a bit of what he took for pre-Raphaelitic work in one of the worst pictures I ever painted, that I was at "last in the right way," or words to that effect. Until that great writer appeared, and in a moment of omniscience discovered some of the glories of Turner, there was not an art critic who did not vilify and ridicule that great man. In the picture by Turner of the burial of Wilkie in the sea, one of the most poetic of the painter's works, the steamer, which is, of course, dark in the moonlight, is called a black fish-kettle, and the friends of the painter are recommended to place him under such restraint as will prevent his exhibiting insults to the public.

In the year 1842, *or thereabouts, Etty exhibited a picture called "To Arms, ye Brave!" in which the power of his matchless painting of flesh was fully displayed. I read in a daily paper the following remarks which did duty for criticism: "Number so-and-so: 'To Arms, ye Brave!' (W. Etty, R.A.). A parcel of people exposing themselves in a manner that calls for the interference of the police." The criticisms in that journal are done very differently now, but I hear my brethren are "frighted from their propriety" now and then by errors which are inconsistent with a thorough knowledge of the subject of which the writer treats.*

The power of the press is enormous, and greater care and knowledge should be used in the wielding of it. I know an instance of the loss of the sale of a picture through an off-hand remark of a great art critic. If the public could only be persuaded that printed opinion is but that of a gentleman or lady who can have no technical knowledge, and which, if expressed vivâ voce *in general society, would have little or no effect, it would appreciate public art criticism at its true value.*

I have known pictures praised by a newspaper in one exhibition, and when the same pictures were exhibited in another place, the same writer in the same paper abused them. A half-length *portrait of Sir Charles Barry by Pickersgill was criticised by a gentleman who never could have seen it, for he said it had the common defect of modern* whole-*lengths, the man's feet were not flat upon the ground; in fact, he stood upon his toes.*

Creswick, the landscape-painter, sent two empty frames to the British Institution to take their places upon the walls pending the finishing of two landscapes destined to fill them. The pictures were admitted at the last moment, too late for a critic to have seen them. The painter's surprise may be imagined when he read an abusive article, in which he was said to be worse than ever, and fast falling into a condition that would make it a world's wonder that he had ever attained a notable position in art at all.

It has always appeared to me that if art criticism can claim to be called a science, its catholicity must

be complete, or, in other words, the critic should be able to estimate at their precise value the merits of all the schools; he should be able to ascend to the sublime height of Michael Angelo, and descend to the lower level of the Dutch school. It should be impossible for him to make a mistake. He may, and of course would, prefer one school to another; but his knowledge of art would prevent his committing such mistakes as those with which the greatest of modern art critics is credited. I have grave doubts of the power to appreciate Turner in one who cannot see the merits of Cuyp and Rembrandt. The ridiculous prices paid for some of the later productions of Turner are strong proofs of the evils of critic-led opinion. I am convinced that if Turner's career had been commenced with the eccentric productions of his later time, his name—now and for ever to be honoured —would never have been heard of.

The policeman at the National Gallery (*I quote from memory a well-known pamphleteer*) *has great opportunities for the study of the old masters; he may have, and in some instances doubtless he has, a great desire to learn from the treasures he is appointed to guard, and thus qualify himself as art critic. Perhaps the absurdity of the comparison between the policeman method and that of the art critic is not so great as it appears; endless instances exist of educated people who stare at pictures, and what they call* study *them, print the result, and thus prove themselves as blind as bats to the merits and defects of the objects of their "study." Hazlitt had just enough*

knowledge to lead him wrong. Lamb knew nothing of art; his criticisms of Hogarth resolved themselves into justly deserved expressions of admiration for the character and expression, and the telling of the story in all the inimitable works of that unapproachable genius, of which his own practice in literature made him a judge. Of the exquisite technical qualities abounding in them he knew no more than the critic who prefaces a cheap edition of Sir Joshua's lectures by ignorant remarks concerning other painters, and gravely informs us that Hogarth was no colourist.

A few personal observations, and this introduction is done. I do not presume to think that my opinion of the literary qualifications of a writer in "Blackwood" is of importance, or likely to gratify that gentleman; but I had more pleasure from his praise of my book than from any of the other gratifying comments that have been showered upon me; but my pleasure was suddenly changed into a different emotion when I found a pretty confident prophecy respecting my artistic work. "The day will assuredly come," said the prophet, "when posterity will read with feelings of astonishment the praises that have now and again been bestowed on Mr. Frith's pictures; they will hold no place in the contemporary art of this time. It will be a matter of wonder how such pictures as the 'Derby Day,' the 'Railway Station,' 'Ramsgate Sands,' etc., could ever have been thought works of art at all." How enviable would be this power of seeing into the dead wall of the future if any human being were really in pos-

session of it! My friend may be right; of course, I think he is wrong, and that the pictures of contemporary life and manners have a better chance of immortality than ninety-nine out of every hundred of the ideal and so-called poetical pictures produced in this generation. With this observation—in which I acknowledge I have abandoned, for the moment, my usual modesty—I take a respectful leave of my critics.

CHAPTER I.

GREAT NAMES, AND THE VALUE OF THEM.

I SHALL never put my pen to paper in this attempt to write an olla-podrida, which is intended to appear as a supplementary volume to my "Reminiscences" already published, without a nervous apprehension that I may repeat myself, and thus inflict upon my reader a very undeserved punishment. As in the previous volumes I have told my history, like Othello, "even from my boyish days," I cannot be supposed to have more to say that is worth hearing; to be candid, I thought a great many of my early experiences were without interest to the general reader. I am very happy to say that I was mistaken, as the unusual interest shown in my book sufficiently proves; and I am not without hope that my present attempt—now grave, in the hope of instructing or warning; now less serious, in the hope of amusing—may not altogether fail of some amount of success. In the present chapter I have something to say respecting a habit of certain art-loving parents who take advantage of the helplessness of infancy to inflict upon their unfortunate

offspring an injury at the baptismal font, from the consequences of which those unhappy children are pretty sure to suffer all their lives. I am, of course, speaking of instances within my own knowledge and experience.

Horatio Green, an artist of lofty ambition and lowly ability, had been married some years before Mrs. Green presented him with a son. Great were the rejoicings, and great was the nonsense talked about the future of young Green. From his infancy, he was destined to prove that the highest art was not to remain the glory of Italy only, but, under the hands of Green junior, it should shine again in the Victorian era; and, by way of assisting towards that glorious consummation, he was christened Michael Angelo. Michael Angelo Green—"Phœbus, what a name!" Up to a certain age, young Michael Angelo was educated by his father. Very little general learning was permitted, with the idea that his genius might be checked in its development. Young Green was made to draw from the antique during the day, when he should have been learning geography and the use of the globes, and his evenings were devoted to copying in outline the compositions of Raphael and Michael Angelo. As Nature intended the aspirant for some mild form of trade—if for anything at all—the result of his studies at the age of sixteen may be imagined. He loathed the antique; and the name of Raphael, and that in which—from no fault of his own—he had been christened, he held in absolute abhorrence.

Parental love, however, or ignorance, blinded his father. Wretched attempts from ancient statues, and incorrect outlines from the Cartoon of Pisa, were looked upon as sure and certain proofs of a genius that would eventually astonish the world; and, in due course, young Green was sent to an art school to be prepared for entrance to the Royal Academy as a student. In those days, admission to the R.A. schools was much easier than it is now; still, to the surprise of his fellow-students, Michael Angelo was successful on his first application. The poor fellow's life in the Academy was a hard one; his ridiculous name made him an easy butt. He tried for medals, and never succeeded in getting one. Without a particle of imagination, he painted pictures which were destitute of every pictorial quality, and refused at all the exhibitions. He tried portraits, which his sitters declined to pay for; and died before he was thirty, a broken-hearted man. Ponder over this, ye foolish parents; and reflect that, by giving your sons great names, you cannot give the genius which made those names immortal, nor will the best training develop a faculty which Nature has failed to implant.

Yet another example. Claude Lorraine Richard Wilson Brown was one of my fellow-students and my intimate friend. He was the son of a clergyman, whose leisure was devoted to the painting of landscape. The Reverend Brown committed every possible sin against the canons of art in the perpetration of those pictures. Sincerely as he worshipped the

works of Wilson and Claude, he failed to see quite the true colour of foliage in the productions of those great men—their trees were not green enough. In Mr. Brown's landscapes that defect was remedied. I know of no green paint so green as the clergyman's trees, and no buildings, castles, and the like, that could stand for a moment, if the laws of gravitation had been so violated in their construction as they were in Mr. Brown's pictures.

"No," he used to say to his son; "I am self-taught. I know my faults" (he knew nothing of the kind). "My inspiration has been the works of the great men whose names you bear. You shall have the best art education that can be procured, and I have not the least doubt that you will eventually justify our choice of your baptismal names." But why should he? Upon what evidence did the parent prophesy so confidently for the son?

When Brown joined the Sassites—as the pupils of Sass were called—his life for a time was a misery. "Why, Claude Lorraine Richard Wilson," said a ribald pupil, "with such jolly names as you have got, you needn't work much. You are not an ordinary student, you know. Nature will do everything for you." He was called "Cerberus Brown." "Why Cerberus?" said poor Brown. "Why? Ain't you three gentlemen in one?"

These gibes would have mattered little if, instead of "Nature doing everything," it had done anything. The *feu sacré* had never been lighted. If excellent education, together with other advantages, would

make an artist, then Brown should have succeeded, for he had the guidance of Wilkie (who, from circumstances to be narrated, took a warm interest in him) as well as the opportunity afforded to us all by dear old Sass.

The interest taken in Brown by Wilkie arose in this wise. The artist had a brother, a clerk in holy orders. Some little time before the appearance of C. L. Richard Wilson at Sass's, his brother had obtained a curacy in London ; he had also engaged himself to be married to Wilkie's sister. The connection was approved on both sides. The pride the Rev. Brown felt at the prospect of an alliance with the Wilkie family may be imagined. The curate's lodgings were within easy distance of Wilkie's house, where, as the courtship went happily on, the clergyman usually spent his evenings. The lover's knock was familiar to his mistress, who generally anticipated the servant, and opened the door for him. One night she did this with happy expectation, when her betrothed staggered, and fell dead at her feet—a victim to disease of the heart which had never been suspected.

Years passed, I believe, before Miss Wilkie recovered from the terrible shock ; and it was not until after her famous brother's death, and she was past middle-life, that she married, her choice being again a clergyman. I saw the lady many years ago at a private view of the Royal Academy, and should have known her at once from her extraordinary likeness to her brother.

I must return to my friend with the remarkable names, by whose career I desire to show something of the folly of outrageous christening. Claude Lorraine was a charming fellow, good-tempered to a degree, fortunately, for he had much to bear. He sang delightfully, and played the flute like an angel. I confess to a great, but ignorant, fondness for music; and the superb performance—or what seemed to me such—of my friend, fired me with an unquenchable desire to learn to play the flute. "I am quite sure I could never be taught to draw" is a very common remark, always surprising to me, because I think anybody can be taught to draw; that "anybody" can be taught to play on the flute I deny, because no human being ever tried harder than I did, or failed more completely. I learned two or three tunes—amongst which I remember "Adeste Fideles," and I played them by a kind of rule of thumb; the notes bewildered me. I treated them with absolute impartiality, for I never knew one from another; in short, as I found playing the same tunes one after another very monotonous to myself, and annoying to those who listened, I gave up the flute as I had given up the violin—the first because I failed to teach myself, and the second because my music-master could not teach me, for he said, "You cannot learn a note."

Many were the pleasant evenings that the Sassites spent at the lodgings of Claude Lorraine. An incident occurred at one of them which may amuse my reader. I must premise that none of us were rich;

suppers therefore were rare ; in fact, refreshment of any kind played a very inferior part in our entertainments. Discussions upon art, in which every kind of youthful ignorance and arrogance was displayed—very disparaging criticism of the works of the Royal Academicians, with Guy Fawkes-like threats of blowing up the Academic body, if not with gunpowder, with fulminations against it and its abuses—formed the frequent burden of our talk. "The cup that cheers but not inebriates," together with muffins, solaced us in the intervals of song and story, when art talk had been voted a bore.

Brown's landlady was blessed with a son, a boy of eleven or thereabouts, who, acting under orders, kept his ears open for the sound of the muffin-bell. In my early days boys and men perambulated the streets carrying baskets containing hot muffins at about the hour when honest people take their tea, and announced their presence by the tinkling of a bell. Little Dick Something—I never knew his name—never failed to signal the approach of the muffin-man, and always in nearly the same words, "Please, sir, I've heerd the bell a-tinkling ; he's a-coming."

On the occasion of the catastrophe which I am about to record there were six guests who declared themselves to be good for a muffin apiece.

"Very well," said our host ; "here, Dick, I have no small change ; take this sovereign, get change, and bring in a dozen muffins."

"All right, sir," said Dick, and disappeared to

meet the muffin-man, whose bell was now audible to us.

In what we guessed to be about the time that our messenger would require to reach the muffins the bell ceased.

"Now listen," said Brown; "as soon as Dick has selected the muffins, and a boy with a better eye for muffins does not breathe, the bell will ring again, and it's quite pretty to listen to it as the sound dies away in the distance."

The bravest held his breath for awhile, but the bell was heard no more.

"Why, what can this mean?" said our host. "Surely the boy has not bought the bell as well as the muffins; however, we shall soon see."

But we did not "soon see," for nearly half an hour passed without the appearance of the boy or the muffins.

Weary with waiting, I volunteered to look for our messenger, and having first ascertained from the landlady that she had seen nothing of her son, I sallied out in quest of him. Not a dozen doors from his own stood our Richard weeping bitterly, as he leant against a column with the muffin-basket covered with green baize on his arm.

"Hallo, you Dick," said I. "What the deuce is the matter with you? Where are the muffins? What are you crying about?"

"Oh, sir—please, sir, I stopped the man as he was a-ringing, and I told him I wanted a dozen of muffins for the gentlemen, sir, and he must give me

change for Mr. Brown's suffering, and he says, 'All right,' he says, 'just you catch holt of this 'ere basket,' he says, 'and I'll go to that there public,' he says, 'and get change;' so I give him the suffering, and he went to get it changed and he never come back"—and then Dick roared aloud.

That night we all went muffinless to bed.

One more reminiscence in which Claude Lorraine figures before I point the moral of my chapter.

Charley Bradford was the son of a rich pawnbroker whose enforced acquaintance with picture pledges had created a taste for art which induced him to try to manufacture an artist out of his son; and the young fellow was sent to Sass's to undergo the operation. Take Charley's work altogether—drawing, painting, and modelling—I think I may safely say it was the very worst I ever saw.

"I know it's bad," he would say with a laugh; "but you fellows just wait till I get hold of a good subject, and then I'll show you what I can do."

"What you can't do, you mean," said an encouraging friend. "Look here," added that gentleman; "you paint your picture, Charley, finish it, bring it to my rooms in Gerrard Street, and I will stand a supper on the occasion, and you shall ask any of the fellows you like—the only condition being that we may criticize your work as much as we please."

"I accept," said Charley.

Can I ever forget that supper and its consequences, which might have terminated so tragically! Our Amphitryon's apartments in Gerrard Street consisted

of two rooms, front and back—the former was the studio, and the latter his bedroom ; and in that land of dreams we assembled to await the glad tidings of supper. Charley's picture, carefully covered up, reposed in one corner.

"You may just as well look at my picture now," said Charley, "while we wait for supper."

"Oh, you want to take away our appetites, do you?" said our host ; "no, no, Charley ; we have something, in all probability, more attractive to cut up before we apply that process to your production."

Supper was announced. The studio presented a gorgeous display. In the centre of the table was one of the largest lobsters ever seen in the sea or out of it. This was flanked by cold meats, roast fowls, and an appetizing pigeon-pie, to say nothing of jellies and cakes in abundance. The atmosphere of the studio was charged with the smell of paint of the delicate aroma of that used by artists, together with a faint odour of tobacco, making together one of the most delightful scents in the world ; but on this occasion our favourite perfume was overpowered by another, which became stronger and more offensive as we approached the supper-table.

"By Jove!" said our host, "I believe it's the lobster. Now, I do call that provoking ; it made such a beautiful centre."

"And a *scenter* it is," said one of the guests, "and the sooner it wastes its sweetness out of this room the better."

The evening wore on "with songs and clatter." The supper was replaced by a steaming bowl of rum-punch, with wine, whisky, and brandy for those who preferred them. Charley Bradford never spared the bottle, and when a man begins by drinking a quantity of beer, qualified now and again by glasses of sherry, and then devotes himself to rum-punch, he must have a strong head if he does not find the mixture too much for him. From the manner in which Charley uncovered his picture, and placed it upon the easel, it was easy to see he was fast approaching the state of bliss that strong drink is said to create. And the picture—let me try to describe it. The scene was a London street, and a man was crossing it carrying a pewter-pot with what appeared to be masses of cotton-wool on the top of it blown about by the wind. At the door of a house to which the pot-bearer was evidently going, stood a man in the costume of the last century.

"What may this be supposed to mean?" said a looker-on.

"Edmund Burke and James Barry, R.A.," replied the artist. "The subject is taken from the life of Barry, where he says he invited Burke to a dinner off steak and porter, and before the steak was cooked Barry went across to the public for a pot of porter, and told them to be sure to draw it with a good head of froth, and they did so, only unfortunately as he went across the road to Burke, who was waiting for him, the beautiful frothy head was blown off by the wind."

"How wonderfully like Joe Wall" (one of our models) "Barry must have been, and Burke too! Why, they are as like one another as twins," said I.

"Well, you see," said Charley, "I employed Joe for both figures, only I had Sir Joshua's portrait of Burke in my eye."

"Had you?" said our host. "Then it must have blinded you, for your Burke is no more like that statesman, according to Reynolds, than you are."

Other criticisms were not more favourable. Bradford's temper was not improved by our remarks, and he took refuge in serious drinking: and amidst such noises as a parcel of thoughtless young students make with songs and disputes over round-games, recitations, and stories, Charley Bradford fell into a sleep so sound that attempts to wake him only served to produce the growls and mutterings common to the drunkard's repose. Our old model Wall had waited upon us at supper, and about midnight, when it became necessary to consider how Bradford was to be taken home, Wall was desired to get a coach and deposit the helpless man at his lodgings.

"Before he leaves us," said Dixon, a Sassite, too much addicted to practical joking, "let us give him something to remind him when he wakes in the morning of how he spent the evening. Here, mine host, just bring your palette with a good lot of vermilion and flake-white upon it, and I will endeavour to improve his complexion."

No sooner said than done, and in a few minutes the insensible sleeper was decorated with a red trian-

gular patch on each cheek; his face was whitened, his mouth enlarged by a touch of vermilion and black at each corner, the result of the whole ill-treatment being the transformation of Charley Bradford into the clown of a pantomime; and in this condition, as we afterwards heard, he was deposited all unconscious in his bed, and in this condition he was awoke the following morning by a loud scream from the servant who brought him his hot water.

"Lord a mercy, Mr. Bradford," said the woman, "what have you been doing of? Is it you, or is it the clown as I see at Ashley's circus?"

"Have you taken leave of your senses, Mary, with your clown and your Ashley's circus? What are you staring at? What is there uncommon about me?"

"What is—oh my!—wait till I get you the looking-glass. There, sir, can you see? Now you know what I am staring at; and, oh, look at your pillow, Mr. Bradford! What will missis say?"

"How the devil has this come about?" muttered Charley. "Here, Mary, bring me some clean rag and some turpentine. Where was I last night? Oh, I know, some of those beggars at Gerrard Street did this. I'll pretty soon find out who it was, and he shall answer for it to me—by Jove, he shall!"

I was cleaning my palette the next day when Dixon was announced.

"Look here," said he, handing me a letter, "what do you think of that?"

"A challenge," said I, "and from Charley Brad-

ford! What rubbish! Of course you will take no notice of it?"

"Won't I, though! Did you ever read anything more insulting? Do you suppose I am going to stand that?"

"Not half so insulting as what you did to Charley. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, and so ought all the rest of us for joining you in such an outrage. I intend to apologize for my share in it, and so ought you."

"Apology be d——d!" said Dixon. "I will apologize to no man after such a letter as that. Will you, or will you not, be my second? As one of my oldest friends, I ask you. If you refuse, I will go to Savage, who will consent at once."

I must remind my readers that just fifty years ago, when the events above related took place, duels were common, and frequently arose from causes much slighter than the affront offered to Bradford.

Dixon went to Savage, who, instead of "consenting at once," roared with laughter at challenged and challenger.

"I be your second, you idiot!" said he—"no; but I intend to be one of the first to go and make my peace with Charley, for I consider myself nearly as much to blame as you. Our only excuse is, and that a bad one, we were all more or less the 'worse for liquor.'"

"Speak for yourself," said Dixon; "I was as sober as I am now."

With all his impetuosity Dixon was a good-hearted

fellow, and it did not require much time or argument to convince him how thoroughly we had all been in the wrong; and by an ample apology from us all, Charley's wrath was assuaged, and a terrible duel prevented. Poor Charley's career as an artist was very short; he died quite young, and thus escaped inevitable disappointment and misfortune.

Claude Lorraine Richard Wilson Brown lived to be a middle-aged man, always an example of the absurdity of his Christian names. I believe he assisted Wilkie in the minor details of some of his later work; but his help must have proved an encumbrance, for it was very soon dispensed with. He was entirely without ability, and never painted a picture that was publicly seen. He became a drawing-master in a country school, by which he earned a precarious livelihood, constantly exposed to the ridicule that his high-sounding names had brought upon him.

CHAPTER II.

PRELUDE TO CORRESPONDENCE.

My old master, Sass, was fond of speaking of a fellow-student of his own, who, after passing with more or less *éclat* through the Royal Academy schools, announced his intention of painting "a large historical picture that should astonish the world."

"You have talked a long time about this intended work of yours," said Sass. "Why don't you paint it; you haven't begun it yet, have you?"

"I can't find a room anywhere suited to my purpose, and for the last year or two I have been seeking in vain. I declare there is scarcely a street in London that I have not searched for a studio, and until I find a place to work in, of course I can't work."

"That man, gentlemen," I fancy I can hear my old master say, "was cursed with an independence, three or four hundred a year, or something, and he didn't want to find a place to work in; and though he lived to middle-age, his great historical work was never executed, because the painter shrank from hard work, without which, whatever your abilities may be, success is impossible."

I desire very strongly to endorse these words. "Fag—fag—fag" was one of Sass's mottoes, and it was constantly impressed upon us. Taking into consideration the variations of temperament and of inclination for one's work, or indisposition towards it, that this our mortal frame is liable to, we cannot escape from feeling occasionally something like loathing for work which but a few hours before, perhaps, we had executed with pleasure. This may arise from an over-estimate of the excellence of the previous day's labour; the next morning's reflection may not justify the favourable condition of mind in which palette brushes had been laid down the evening before; and then a terrible disinclination to go on sets in. The morning is fine; a friend (or enemy, rather) drops in; we are seduced away, and a day is lost.

Believing, as I have every reason to do, in hard and constant work, I earnestly desire to warn the student against waiting for a disposition to work. Nothing is more common than for a young man—or an elderly one, for the matter of that—to say, "Oh, I couldn't work to-day; somehow or other I could not get the steam up; I set my palette, but the inclination to work would not come." My reply to that is, "You should have set to work, whether you were in the humour or not," and you would have found, before you had been painting half an hour, that an "exposition" of work had come over you to such a degree as to carry you on successfully through the day.

I, who speak, have experienced the truth of the

above hundreds of times. I don't think I ever allowed myself to be stopped from regular work by any of the qualms of disinclination. When I have urged my views on the question of steady and continuous industry on some volatile natures, I have been told that "a man must wait till his genius prompts before he can work, and that painting done against the grain can be but poor stuff."

For myself, I must admit that if I had waited till "genius" urged me on, I should be waiting at this moment; my pictures would not have been painted, and the invaluable advice I now offer would have been stillborn.

What is genius? How much easier it is to show what is not genius in the abundant proof we have in all the exhibitions! Reynolds warns us against putting any dependence on our own genius. If that great painter had bequeathed to us some test by which the presence of the sacred fire could be detected, he would have conferred a greater benefit on his successors than can easily be imagined. What misery would have been escaped, and what happiness would have been destroyed! How many instances have I known of men who, living in the full persuasion that they were God-gifted geniuses, have persevered from year to year, in spite of every kind of rebuff, in producing pictures destitute not only of genius, but of anything approaching to talent! But they were happy in their delusion. Not, perhaps, being obliged to work for their daily bread, their lives were, as I heard one of them say, "one long

summer holiday," darkened only occasionally by a want of present appreciation. "What can I care for a public which applauds the work of —— and ——?" (naming two popular men). "This picture will be turned out, Frith, as my Holy Family was last year; but I am perfectly certain that posterity will reverse the judgment of prejudiced and ignorant R.A.'s. I paint for the future, my dear fellow. Was Shakespeare appreciated in his own time, or soon after it? (read what Pepys says of the 'Midsummer Night's Dream'). Was Milton, who got five pounds for 'Paradise Lost'?"

But now let us turn to the plodder who has to get his living by the art. It has always been an insoluble puzzle to me that a man who is eloquent over the beauties of Reynolds and Gainsborough, who is even a good critic of a friend's work, can be perfectly blind to his own faults. He will proudly put a picture before you which is so childishly bad, so utterly destitute of every principle of art, as to make criticism impossible and laughter very difficult to avoid; yet this man is a model of hard work and good conduct. What a miserable life is his, eked out by aid from the charities with which our profession abounds! While no magic wand exists by which we can gauge the depths of our own incompetence, these sad examples must continue, and it is not to such that any advice is needed or useful.

CHAPTER III.

EARLY CORRESPONDENCE.

By the perusal of the following letters, written to my mother when I was a boy-student at Sass's, while the reader may be amused by the youthful vanity and other shortcomings displayed in them, he will learn that it is only by long and unceasing industry that success, if not eminence, can be attained by one —if I read myself correctly—of but moderate ability.

I confess I think that this lesson requires teaching in the present day, when it is not common for students to devote themselves to their studies, as these letters prove that I did, working generally from eight to ten hours a day. Unfortunately the few first letters which I wrote on my introduction into the Sass family, in March, 1835, have been lost. The others, so lovingly preserved by my mother, appear in regular sequence, vividly recalling to me "the days that are no more," arousing many pleasurable feelings, and many bitter regrets that I did not take fuller advantage of the opportunities afforded me.

As my mother is about to figure in my reminis-

cences, I yield to my sister's entreaty that I will say something about her "birth and parentage;" not without a dread that, by following in the footsteps of the usual reminiscencer who is fond of talking of matters that can be of no interest to anyone but himself, I may make myself as uninteresting as he so often proves himself to be. I may urge, however, that without my mother my reader would not have had me; and as I have satisfactory proof that he takes an interest in my unworthy self, I now ask of his forbearance a little attention for my mother.

My mother, whose maiden name of Powell I bear, was the daughter of a Shropshire squire, who spent a tolerable fortune in extravagance and self-indulgence, much of which fortune ought to have been devoted to the education of his children, a duty he carefully neglected. My great-grandfather was a clergyman, of whom I know nothing; but, judging from the conduct of his son, I imagine that he either neglected to put before that young gentleman the principles which should have been his guide through life, or, as is very probable, the son declined to be guided at all. My grandmother, who long survived the squire, lived and died in the last house that remained of the Powell property, leaving me as a legacy her wedding-dress, which I have found an excellent "property" as a piece of costume. Dolly Varden wears it; Sophia Primrose, of immortal "Vicar of Wakefield" fame, is dressed in it in several pictures—to say nothing of one or two "Brides of Lammermoor," and others; and, con-

sidering it is at least a hundred and thirty years old —indeed, in spite of its age—it looks nearly as fresh as it must have looked on the wedding-morning.

As I have spoken of my mother—the "proud Salopian," as she used to call herself—I think I should be undutiful if I did not say a few words about my father. A very few words are all I can say, for they will express all I know.

John Frith, who lived ages ago, well—but not, I should say, enviably—known as a martyr (he was burnt in Smithfield), my mother always declared, was my ancestor. I should require stronger proof than any she could produce to convince me that I am descended from that heroic individual. Between the sacrifice of the martyr and the appearance of my father's father, history is silent; we have no connecting link. With respect to my paternal grandfather I can say very little. I never heard my father mention him; but I have heard from another source that he kept an inn at Mansfield, and failed in it. This is a melancholy falling off from the ancestor who died for his faith; but it is better than being burnt. I well remember my Grandmother Frith; she lived with us at Harrogate till she died, about sixty years ago. She was of a very uncertain temper, to use a common phrase; and she and my brother used to fight, with the result on one occasion of a serious blow from that young pugilist. On second thoughts, I don't think the phrase of "uncertain temper" was quite applicable to the old lady; for she was always more or less irritable,

especially at dinner-time, when, if anything offended her, she would leave the dining-room, and, taking her plate with her, she would eat her dinner sitting on the stairs. I fear I have to confess that we boys were not grieved when our grandmother joined our martyred ancestor.

With these preliminary family details, I introduce my reader to my youthful correspondence with my mother. As I entered the Sass school on the 4th of March, 1835, the following letter, dated the 18th, could not have had many predecessors:

"Charlotte Street,
"Bloomsbury,
"March 18, 1835.

"My dear Mother,

"I received your letter, or rather sermon, as you observe, the other day, and I think you cannot condemn me for remissness in answering it. I am very glad indeed that father got safe home. I hope his cold is no worse. He had very bad weather indeed for his journey. Last Monday night I was at the lecture at the Royal Academy, and I shall go again this evening (Thursday). Westmacott lectured on Monday on sculpture, and Howard lectures this evening on painting. Of course I cannot yet understand much from lectures; but, as long as I can get an artist's ticket, I shall go. Each R.A. has two tickets. I have one of Etty's. Mr. White, one of our young gents, lends it to me. The artists' tickets are made of ivory; and I have only to show it to the porter at Somerset House, and he lets me in. Last

Monday I was with Mr. Sass. I exchanged bows with Sir Martin Archer Shee, P.R.A. Mr. S. is very intimate with him. I find that by constantly practising outlines my hand attains a precision and correctness which before I knew nothing of, and I now begin to see some of the rascally faults in all my drawings. Yesterday I was at the Suffolk Street Exhibition. There I saw H.'s pictures, but they won't do there; his colouring is thin and washy. He will do very well for Knaresborough, but there he must stay. If he had been educated in Mr. Sass's studio he would have turned out very different to what he is. The best pictures at that exhibition are by one of Mr. S.'s pupils—think of that, now! You cannot think how comfortable I am here. I get fonder of my profession as I go on, though I am now at the most disgusting part of it—the outlines. You talk of my being gentlemanly in my manners. I told you when I was in polite company I behaved as such. I dare say you would not know me if you saw me now. I am altered *quite entirely*, as the Irishmen say. . . .

"I very seldom go out; I generally stay at home and read. I go to church with Mr. Sass every Sunday, and I can always make myself comfortable at home, unless I have a specific invitation to go out. The young man who lodges with me is a Unitarian, but that is nought to me. I have written to Charles. Tell father he did not leave Mr. Sass's book at uncle's. I hope he has found it. Give my love to him. . . .

"Also to Jane . . . Mary Anne, and all friends. Remember me kindly to old Kendel, and tell her I shall be able to paint her portrait when I return. Love to all. I hear a knock at the door; it is the young man who goes with me to the lecture. So good-bye. Love to all.

"I remain,

"My dear mother,

"Your affectionate and dutiful son,

"W. P. FRITH."

"*Friday morning.*—I have just received your letter franked by the bishop. I did not expect you would write again so soon. I have explained everything, I think, in this letter. You need not have troubled yourself to mutilate the paper, as I heard both the lectures. We had a very good one indeed last night by Howard on composition. I am scarcely far advanced enough to understand them yet; but it is a great advantage to be able to go at all. You talk of my giving you a specimen of my drawing in a month's time! I shall be in outlines for three months. Take that, now, mother. I shall take great care of my money, keep accounts, etc. Mr. and Mrs. Sass are the nicest people in the world. I am very happy. Good-bye. Love to all. I will write again soon."

The Westmacott alluded to in the foregoing letter was Sir Richard, a very eminent sculptor, who was still living in 1846. At one of the Academy

meetings I heard him give an admirable description of Marat—Charlotte Corday's victim—one of whose furious harangues the sculptor heard him deliver before the National Assembly in Paris. The Howard, whose mumbled lectures I well remember trying to hear, had received the medal for historical painting from the hands of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who also gave the young painter letters of introduction to the British Minister at Naples.

I find in the following letter a description of the dinner at Sass's, written at the time, an account of which is given in my "Reminiscences," vol. i. It varies somewhat from the narrative prompted by memory, and I publish it, as I think it interesting, as being my immediate impression of the occurrence.

"6, Charlotte Street,
"Bloomsbury,
"Good Friday, 1835.

"My dear Mother,

* * * * *

"I shall now give you a description of our dinner-party. I have been introduced to the immortal Wilkie. He is a very tall, gaunt Scotchman, a very surly-looking man, but quite the gentleman in his behaviour. Etty is a very curious-looking man; his head is much too large for his body; he is very much marked with the small-pox; in short, he is what is called a regular vulgar-looking, clod-hopping Yorkshireman; but as soon as he speaks all the impression that his ugly face has made upon you wears off, and you are at once surprised at his great

gentlemanly behaviour. *He is a great favourite of mine.* Constable and Eastlake were also there, but those, I think, you have not heard much about. They are both very nice men. Constable is the best landscape-painter we have; he is a very merry fellow, and very rich. He told us an anecdote of a man who came to look at his pictures: he was a gardener! One day he called him into his painting-room to look at his pictures, when the man made the usual vulgar remarks, such as, 'Did you do all this yourself, sir?' 'Yes.' 'What, all this?' 'Yes.' 'What, frame and all?' etc., etc. At last he came to an empty frame that was hung against the wall without any picture in it, when he said to Constable, looking at the empty frame, 'You don't call this picture quite finished, do you, sir?' Constable said that quite sickened him, and he never let any ignoramuses see his pictures again, or frames either. We had a most beautiful dinner, champagne, claret, hock, etc., all sorts of sweets, ices, etc. We dined at eight. I was in bed about one. Since then we have had a ball to commemorate Miss Sass's birthday. We did dance away famously. Both Wilkie and Etty were there. I danced in the same quadrille with Wilkie. *There is an honour for you!* I am getting on. I only wish I had never attempted drawing before. I have ten times greater difficulties to contend with in getting out of my own bad way than I should have had if I had not drawn before. However, I still persevere. We kept up the ball till nearly two o'clock yesterday morning. I was

very tired. I danced nearly every quadrille. Two sons and two daughters of Martin, the 'great painter,' as Bulwer calls him, were there. I danced with the two girls. They are very nice girls. Martin himself is a very handsome man; both his sons and his daughters are very good-looking. I spent a very pleasant evening. Remember me kindly to all friends. My love to father and Jane.

"Your affectionate and dutiful son,

"W. POWELL FRITH.

"P.S.—Mr. G—— has gone out of town for a few days. He is the greatest ass I ever met with. Ask father if I may have a coat; none of the others wear jackets, and they laugh at mine. The Martins are both less than me, and they have coats. I am the only one with a jacket. Coax him to let me have a frock-coat. We had hot-cross buns for breakfast. God bless you. Good-bye."

"6, Charlotte Street,
"Bloomsbury,
"May 2, 1835.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"I received your letter the other day by the threepenny post, and I was very glad to find you were satisfied with the way in which I spent my money; it does seem a great deal, but that is only at the outset. I have just returned from the water-colour exhibition; it is the best there has been for a long time. I had no idea they could bring them to the perfection at which they have arrived. I have begun drawing in pen and ink to amuse myself in

the evenings, so I shall soon send you something; it is in imitation of etching. I have succeeded uncommonly well in it. I have done one; Miss Sass begged it for her album. Animals I like best. I did not go with the Cracknells to the play, because I don't care much for the play. I think that it is in some cases a very pleasant kind of recreation after the labours of the day, and it is all very well for those who have five or six hundred a year. With regard to the clothes, I shall have a frock-coat first, because I don't suppose I shall go to any parties before Christmas, so I don't want a dress-coat; besides, I should look a regular guy in a swallow-tail. I shall wear my old jacket and waistcoat as long as they will hold together; any clothes are good enough to wear in the studio. You must tell me what they have done about Scruton; I don't think they will be able to get him off. I hope you will not forget us when you send the game to London. The Sasses are amazingly fond of grouse, and by your doing that I shall become a greater favourite. We were very merry on Mr. Sass's birthday; he is only forty-eight, but we always call him 'Old Sass.'

"Remember me to Mr. Matthewman, and tell him I shall be glad to show him the studio; but I never show it to ladies, because they don't understand it. Give my love to all. I am quite well. London agrees with me much better than I expected.

"I remain, my dear mother,

"Your dutiful son,

"W. P. Frith."

If a youth of sixteen were to tell me he didn't care for the play, I should have a poor opinion of his truthfulness. I was not habitually untruthful when I wrote the foregoing, or since, I hope ; but knowing my passion for the theatre when I was young, I cannot reconcile my profession of indifference with a due regard for truth. The man Scruton alluded to was a peasant, a mower, who, in a fit of passion, struck a fellow-labourer with his scythe, and killed him. He was tried, and condemned to five years' imprisonment.

"6, Charlotte Street,
"Bloomsbury,
"Thursday Evening,
"May 15, 1835.

"My dear Mother,

"I am rather disappointed at not receiving a letter from you before this time. I trust that indisposition has not caused your not writing. I went to the exhibition at Somerset House last Monday, and was very much pleased indeed. Both Wilkie and Etty are at the top of the tree. I think Etty is much better than Wilkie this year. Wilkie is getting careless. Landseer has the most splendid picture I ever saw ; it is truly magnificent. I dare say you will see the full account in the paper. Do not pay attention to the opinion of the papers, because they know nothing at all about it. . . .

"Tell father I do want some razors, and no mistake. I don't want the assistance of bear's-grease ; beard grows fast enough without. I am very glad

Charles appears so happy at school. I hope you will like the drawing I have sent; I assure you it takes an immense time to do it. Tell Jane she may put it in her album if she likes. I am now doing some dogs; they will look very nice. Mr. Sass's little child has been very ill; they did not expect it to live; but it is now better. Tell father he saw it when he was here. I am getting on very well; I shall soon have done my outlines, and *then I begin the ball!* That is a great piece of plaster-of-Paris made round, which we have to shade. I have taken great pains over my outlines; a great deal depends upon that. Mr. Sass has just received some cream-cheeses from some friends of his in Yorkshire; some of the family of the *Copes*. I believe he was Mr. Copes's most intimate friend, and he left Mr. Sass his son and daughter to take care of. His son is now in Rome—a very promising young artist—and his daughter is married. I have seen her several times; she is very often here. Send Mr. Sass the ham as soon as you can. I have not told him about it; but I know he would not mind paying the carriage of it, and he is exceedingly fond of Yorkshire ham. You need not tell aunt, or else she will kick up a pretty row. The other evening when I was at Brook Street, she said to me, 'You don't want any supper, do you?' 'Yes, indeed, I do,' says I. 'Lawks, William, you dine at five, and supper again at nine! you'll make yourself ill, I know.' However, I got my supper all the same for that. I send you two stiffeners; have them covered, and send

them as soon as you can—one long and one short. I got my coat and wore it first time last Sunday. 'Oh, what a dandy!' says one fellow. 'What a swell!' says another. Every blackguard seemed to know I had a new coat on; it is invisible green, a very serviceable colour; it looks just like black. . . . . I hope I shall hear from you soon. My love to Mary Anne, and tell her to put plenty of silk on those stocks, and that good. My love to all.

"Your affectionate and dutiful son,

"W. P. FRITH.

"P.S.—Remember me to all friends. Give my love to father. I expect to have a letter before you get this. I am very well. Give my love to all. Good-bye. We have to learn all the names of the muscles, their origin, insertion into the bones, and their use. 'What think o' that?' Ta-ta. I am now studying anatomy.

"Be sure to write to me soon. The weather is very bad here now. I get up at six o'clock every morning when it is fine, and walk out. I find it won't do to encourage habits of laziness; they grow upon one so."

* * * * *

"I am very sorry I cannot send you the head. However, the first opportunity I hear of, I will not neglect to send it.

"I am going up to aunt's this evening to try to get this franked for you. I hope this won't keep it

a month before it goes. Give my love to all friends at home.

"Good-bye.

"W. P. FRITH."

"Charlotte Street,
"Bloomsbury,
"May 27, 1835.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"When I write again, I will send you a horse's head, which I am taking a great deal of pains with. I don't wish it to be given away. I could not delay writing any longer. When I write again, I will try for a *frank*, and send you the drawing. They take an immense deal of work. I was up at six o'clock both yesterday and to-day to try and get it done for to-night, but could not. Last Saturday four of us went to Hampton Court to see the cartoons of Raphael. I won't say a *word* about how much we were delighted, because words cannot express our delight. We spent a very pleasant day. We went over to Richmond by the coach, which cost 2s.; walked from Richmond to Hampton Court, which is four miles; saw the pictures, 1s.; had dinner, 2s. more; and came home by the packet, 2s. more. In all it cost 7s., and certainly seven shillings were never better spent, for it inspired us with that enthusiasm that all four of us mean to work our trousers' bottoms through to do the same as Raphael, and why should we not? We can *will* anything which is not contrary to nature. As Sir Joshua Reynolds said when he commenced his profession,

he *would* be a great man, and he *was* a great man. Whatever profession he had followed, he would have been equally great—that's my firm opinion! Don't forget Mr. Sass's ham, and please put my stocks in with it. I have 15s. of the sovereign left. However, it gradually diminishes; things will diminish when they are used, my dear ma. I have been to see Mr. Hope's gallery, Mr. H. has a splendid collection of cabinet pictures, and not so good a one of large ones; they seem to be inferior works of the great masters. Mr. Sass is a great Radical, and friend of O'Connell. You must have read about the affair between O'Connell and young D'Israeli. When he catches the rebellious Irishman, such a sound thrashing will he get as will make him remember. Sir Thomas Lawrence made a collection of more than a hundred original drawings by most of the old masters, which are now exhibiting. They will show to the ignorant that they did not attain their celebrity by jumping into it, but by hard and incessant work. I work from six o'clock in the morning to half-past seven at night, so I think you can't say I am idle. Give my love to all friends. I am quite well. Don't forget my *stocks*, etc., etc. Best love to father, Jane, and Charles, and believe me,

"My dear mother,

"Your affectionate and dutiful son,

"W. Powell Frith."

It is so long since the above was written, that I cannot now even faintly recall the impression that

the first sight of the famous cartoons made upon me; but as it required a great many years' practice of my profession to enable me to see any beauty in them at all, I fear I must put down the youthful enthusiasm expressed above as nothing less than hypocritical twaddle. The exhibition of the Lawrence drawings I can well remember, also the efforts which were made to induce the Government of the day to secure some at least of the priceless things for this country. Those efforts failed, and the whole collection, containing drawings and sketches by nearly all the great masters, was dispersed; and foreign students have now the inestimable advantage of easy access to methods of study which would have been invaluable to the artists of this country. The *stocks* alluded to were neckerchiefs artificially stiffened, with a made bow in front, and fastened behind the neck with a strap and a buckle. This article of costume may be seen in the illustrations of "Pickwick" and others of Dickens's earlier works. Unless the strap was carefully secured by the buckle, it would stick straight out at the back of the neck, producing a rather ludicrous appearance.

"6, Charlotte Street,
"Bloomsbury,
"July 21, 1835.

"My dear Father,

* * * * *

"I have now done my *ball*, which instructs us in three very material points, which are *light and shadow*, *mechanical execution*, and *rotundity*, all of

which I have succeeded in to the utmost extent of my wishes. Mr. Etty called here the other day, and came up into the studio, and looked at my ball. He told me it was very well, and that I was a very promising youth. It is a great honour to be told that by one of the first artists of the age, and it was very flattering to me indeed. Mr. Sass's little boy was christened last Tuesday. Mr. Etty is his godfather. I have not the least doubt of my success in my profession, as I have succeeded so well so far. Tell mother she is mistaken as to Sir T. Lawrence's drawings. They are not by him—only collected by him. They are original drawings of Titian, Rubens, Rembrandt, Vandyke, Raphael, and several others of the great masters, which are now exhibiting in the cosmorama, Regent Street.

"I have had an invitation from my Aunt Kate to go down to Willingdon; but I wrote back to her, and thanked her for her kindness, and told her that some other time I would go and see them. I think, if you have no objection, that in about a month, when I have finished my ball, I should like to go down there for two or three days. Mr. Sass recommends it, as he says I look rather *pale*. However, thank God, I never was better or happier in my life. It is very likely that such a great change in my habits would make me look a little pale. I have a walk generally every day, and feel in excellent health.

"I draw from dinner till tea-time from chairs, tables, stools, etc., because if a man can't draw a

chair, how can he draw a head, when one is so much more difficult than the other? A chair is difficult enough; but now I find them quite easy. I have learnt a great deal of perspective; and, altogether, am getting on as well as I could wish. . . .

"Give my love to mother, and tell her to write to me soon.

"Remember me to all friends, and believe me,

"My dear father,

"Your affectionate and dutiful son,

"W. Powell Frith.

"P.S.—You must excuse this bad writing, for it is wretched paper, and a still worse pen. I believe uncle is going to Guernsey for a trip this summer. I don't think he looks very well. Aunt is just as great a screw as ever; but now that I know her better, I don't mind her. We are very good friends indeed, and never have a word about anything. My love to all. God bless you."

In the above I think I made satisfactory capital out of my *paleness*, and disguised my desire to get away for a holiday tolerably well.

'6, Charlotte Street,

'Aug. 30, 1835.

"My dear Mother,

"I will do a drawing to send to grandmother; but the only time I have to do these *pretty* drawings is in the evening, because doing them, or

copying from prints at all, is complete waste of time. I have begun my first drawing from the *round*, and I have been very successful. As soon as it is finished, I will send it to you with the ball and grapes. I should like very much to go down to Uncle Ades for a week some time in September to have a little shooting. I don't think my request is very unreasonable, as I have been less from my studies than any of them; and I have no doubt when you hear from Mr. Sass, from the account that he will give of me, you will have no objection to my going. I will send you my old clothes; you won't find much *wear* in them. I have worn them all till I outgrew them. I can wear my boots quite out, because my feet don't grow so fast.

"We work very hard here; but I like my work so much, that the time never hangs heavily on my hands. No one knows what it is to work ten hours a day and never stir from their work. It's very different to being behind a counter, where they run about all day.

"Mr. Sass will tell you I have not been idle. I hope to 'try for the Academy' in nine months more.

"I have sent you the account of my money from April 16, when it comes to £4 19s. 9d. I hope you will be satisfied that I have spent nothing but what is necessary. I went yesterday to Dulwich to see the gallery of pictures. There are some splendid pictures, and I was very much pleased.

"I walked there and back. It is eight miles

there, and eight back again. It would have cost 2s. to go by coach; so I saved the expense at the cost of being very tired, and having my feet well blistered. Give my love to father, my love to Mary Anne, and yourself.

"Your affectionate and dutiful son,

"W. Powell Frith."

I may indulge a natural vanity by introducing in this place a letter from "old Sass," which vastly gratified my parents, as it contains a satisfactory account of my progress and general conduct:

"London,

"June 4, 1835.

"My dear Sir,

"Yesterday being the termination of the first quarter of your son's residence with my family, and of his studies, I thought it would be pleasing to you and Mrs. Frith to have some report of his progress.

"It gives great pleasure to me, and will be gratifying for you, to learn that he is a great favourite with us all, and conducts himself in every way that a father could desire. He is an early riser, and conforms with pleasure to all usages, accompanying us to church; and, indeed, appears perfectly happy in our domestic arrangements. With respect to his studies, he has gone on docilely, perseveringly, and successfully, as far as he has gone, and really evinces great feeling for the profession he has chosen. He consults with me and his uncle on

everything he desires to do. To this I must add that he is always lively, intelligent, and full of inquiry. I enclose the account of the next quarter from this day ; and, presenting my best respects to Mrs. Frith, remain,

"Dear Sir,

"Yours sincerely,

"HENRY SASS."

Thos. Frith, Esq., on account of his son, Mr. W. P. Frith.

1835.	£	s.	d.
"June 4. Board and lodgings three months from date -	26	5	0

"London,

"Tuesday, March 1, 1836.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"It gave me great pleasure to receive your letter. Give my love to Jane, and tell her I hope the purse will be done by the time I come home, as I want one very much—mine has got a large hole in it, by and through which all my money goes as fast as it comes in ; therefore, if she can make one without any hole in it at all, the money inside will stand a better chance of staying there. I shall take care of myself coming, depend upon it. I'se York ! I have forgotten all my Yorkshire. I shall learn it again when I come back. I must draw you something pretty when I come home. I have had no time to make pretty drawings since I have been here—all anatomical, perspective, broken Venus, legs, toes, arms, etc., and so on. I have no time to say any more, as it is just time to send this to the

post. I hope father, Jane, etc., are all quite well. Give my best love to them. I shall write no more now. Good-bye till I see you.

"Your affectionate son,

"W. P. Frith, P.R.A.

"(Porter of the Royal Academy).

"P.S.—I have sent my drawing to the Society, and so I have no more to do with that."

In my early days, a medal at the Society of Arts, then existing in the old rooms, decorated by Barry, R.A., in the Adelphi, was eagerly competed for by art students. I think Millais' first medal was gained in that now-forgotten institution. The drawing alluded to in the foregoing letter gained a prize, a medal which I have since managed to lose—strange carelessness!—as, though I tried for many medals, the Society of Arts' one was my solitary triumph. I have to except, however, a French gold medal, awarded to me in 1857. As this is worth about five-and-twenty pounds, it has been more carefully looked after.

"London,

"May 2, 1836.

"*First Day of Exhibition, Somerset House.*

"My dear Mother,

"Both your letters have come to hand. I was very glad, indeed, to receive them. I have just returned from the exhibition, where I accompanied the Misses Sass. I have had a delightful afternoon,

but it has made my head ache very much. Wilkie has got several famous pictures ; he is now at the very tip-top of fame, for more splendid pictures he has never painted. One, his largest, is Napoleon at Fontainebleau, with Pope Pius VII. He stands beautifully, with a large parchment in his hand, which he asks the Pope to sanction—it is his separation from Josephine. The Pope seems determined not to sign, but by the Emperor's countenance I should say he knows that he can make him. They say it is a capital likeness of the Pope ; I know it is a good one of Napoleon. The hands are most elegantly and beautifully drawn and coloured. There are many magnificent pictures, and it would fill my letter to describe them. I cannot omit saying a word or two about Cope. The subject of his picture is an Italian nobleman in the dungeon of the Inquisition, receiving his death-warrant. The monk hands him the paper with cool indifference, mixed with abhorrence ; while, by the melancholy, submissive look of the prisoner, you would say he had long expected, and was fully prepared for, his doom. Two executioners, or 'familiars,' as they are termed, are seen at the door, ready to conduct the unwavering Christian to his last home. The story is well told, the colouring splendid, the shadows pure and transparent, the drawing excellent, and, in fact, the least that can be said of it is, that the expression and effect of the head of the nobleman would do credit to Wilkie. I am getting on, I hope, very well. I have made a finished drawing of that child's

head, just to get my hand in, and since that I have drawn two figures. I play an hour and a half every day on the flute; I am determined to learn it properly. A friend of mine (Lear, the famous lithographer of the Zoological Society) has lent me a book, and I already know and can play my notes; but he tells me (and he plays most beautifully) that it is a very bad thing to learn upon this flute. He says I shall never be able to finger one with extra keys if I go on playing upon a flute with only one key. So you must send me that one of Charles's that Cookson gave him, and if anything wants doing to it, I will get it done, and will take great care of it. Be sure and send it the first opportunity. I can never play more than 'God save the King' and a few others of that sort upon this flute.

"I went down and drew at the 'Society of Arts,' but I don't know where the medals are to be given. I rather think we shall have them in *Covent Garden Theatre*. I drew a head of Mars, and they were satisfied with it. I shall not have the head time enough to go to York; besides, it is quite ridiculous sending those things to exhibitions; you will only be laughed at for it. However, you can send them if you like. You must call that Santeen's head '*Decebalus, from the antique*.' Be sure you don't put it in a *black frame*; if you do, you will spoil it—it should be a *maple* or *oak* one. The other one, you know, is '*Young Bacchus, from the antique*.' Give my love to father, Jane, and Anne, and Mary Anne. It is rather strange that last exhibition-day I lost

my cloak, and to-day I had my pocket picked, the only two things I have ever lost since I came to London. I fancy I can hear father say I shall lose my head next exhibition. I was walking quietly along with Miss Sass, and a lad came up to me and told me he saw a boy running away with my handkerchief. I thanked him for his consoling news. Charles will say that comes of wearing swallow-tails. Let me hear from you very soon. Give my love to all. Believe me,

"My dear mother,

"Your affectionate and dutiful son,

"W. P. Frith."

The assertion in the foregoing letter that "I already know and can play my notes" is, I fear, to state it mildly, inaccurate, and most likely made for the purpose of obtaining a better flute.

The following letter gives a description of the distribution of the Society of Arts prizes :

"6, Charlotte Street,

"Bloomsbury,

"June 9, 1836.

"My dear Mother,

"At last this fearful event is over, and I have received my medal. I shall not forget to send it by Young. They were given away last Tuesday by Sir Edward Codrington in the Hanover Square Rooms. The room was crammed. There were upwards of a thousand people in it.

"So great was the demand for tickets, that many

of the members have paid up three or four years' subscription in arrears in order to obtain them.

"We were called to the front of the platform one after another, and Sir Edward said something to everyone who went up to him. He told me he hoped I should soon so much improve as to enable me to use a material more stable and lasting than chalk; and all the time he was saying this, I was standing in front scraping and bowing, and cutting capers, till at last I was heartily glad when I received my medal, made my bow, and retired. You may imagine I felt rather nervous. Now, on the strength of this medal, I have indulged myself with an instruction-book for the flute; and how much do you think it cost? I absolutely dare not tell you; so you must wait and consider about it till the end of the letter. And, what is more, I want something else from you; and that is—what *do* you think? I want you—to let me—have—— I dare not tell you till the end of this epistle; so you will wait in delightful *sus*pense, to say nothing about *ex*pense.

"I have nearly shaded a figure, and have succeeded capitally. I have got the greatest medal that I can get for a drawing, so I shall wait till I can paint before I send in again.

"I went to aunt's last night, and showed them my medal. They asked what was the use of it, and what it was *worth*. Ah! you may laugh; but you will perceive they have a fine high feeling for the arts, and would be fully able to appreciate the works of Michael Angelo and the Divine Raphael.

"All the artists are going to sign a paper to petition Government to purchase the Lawrence collection of old masters' drawings for the nation. I am sure I hope they will succeed; it will be a great benefit to us. Jane may have that Cupid. You must give it to her, with my love, and tell her to keep it in her album to astonish the natives with. To-morrow is the anniversary of Mr. Sass's wedding-day. I think he has been married twenty-one years, and a very happy man he has been. He has a good wife, and a good and consequently happy family. Remember me to Mr. Cookson, and all Harrogate friends. Give my best love to father, Jane, and Charles. I shall write to him soon. Good-bye.

"Yours affectionately and dutifully,

"W. Powell Frith.

	£	s.	d.
"Instruction-Book - - - -	1	10	0
Twelve lessons (wot I want) - -	2	2	0
	£3	12	0

"Don't be in a rage."

"6, Charlotte Street,
"Bloomsbury,
"July 11, 1836.

"My dear Mother,

"I have received both your letters. I have copied the Vice-Chancellor's note, which I herewith send. It was very kind of him indeed to write to father. He is mistaken both as to the time it is requisite to stay with Mr. Sass, and also to stay in the Royal Academy. The time for what we call

'trying for the Academy' is at Midsummer and Christmas, when each student sends in a drawing of the whole-length figure from the antique, and as many drawings as the Council of Academicians deem sufficiently good are admitted as *probationers*. Then three months are allowed to make another drawing from the antique *in the Academy* (to show that we have done that drawing that we sent in), and a skeleton and anatomical figure. If *all these* are done well enough, we then receive our students' tickets; if they are not, we are turned out to try again the ensuing Midsummer or Christmas until we do get in. Eighteen months is about the necessary time to study with Mr. Sass before we try for the Academy; but I hope to be in there this time twelve months, when I shall only have been fifteen months with Mr. Sass.

"I hope you will like the drawings which I send. You can give the horse's head to Miss Fox, if you like; but keep the lion, as it is my *very first attempt in sepia*, so you cannot expect it to be very good. I hope you will like it.

"I am convinced that unless a man will *fag*, *fag*, *fag*, he cannot succeed. When we get into the Academy, that is the first step; after, we try for medals; then to get into the life Academy; then to get to paint from the life; then into the painting-school; then to try to be an associate; then an R.A.; and lastly, as a finale to the whole piece, W. P. Frith, P.R.A.—your humble servant.

"You may give which drawing you like to Miss

Fox; I don't value those things much. I draw a great many chairs, stools, etc. — capital practice, those. Give my love to father; I have written to Charles. Remember me to all, dear mother.

"Your affectionate and dutiful son,

"WILL FRITH."

The next letter alludes to a severe cold, caught by injudicious bathing, under date July 17, 1836:

"London,

"July 17, 1836.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,

"I have had a slight cold and have been altogether rather unwell (but nothing to speak of) this last week; but I could not help mentioning it on purpose to tell you of the very great kindness of the Sasses to me. If I had been with you I could scarcely have been treated more kindly; everything I wished for was almost given me before I asked it, and I feel I owe them a heavy debt which I can only repay by my gratitude. I gave Mr. S. your cheque immediately on receipt of it. You say you hope Mr. Sass means to paint my portrait. Are you ready to pay twenty guineas for it? I guess not, because, if you are, I can order it directly; but even if he does paint it, I don't know that he means to give it to me; he may, or he may not. He says he shall begin it very soon. He certainly has been about to begin it ever since I have been here, but whether he ever will begin it or not I am sure I can't say.

"I subscribed to the bath directly on receipt of your first letter; but I have not been at all last week on account of my cold. The subscription for three months was only fourteen shillings, so I thought it best to subscribe; don't forget that when you send the money. It is very delightful and healthy recreation. I wish I had known of it before. The bath at the deepest end will about take me up to my chin. Then we have such glorious plunges. I wish Charles was here; he would enjoy it. You have no idea what a number of Frenchmen there are always there. I suppose it is because they are more dirty than the English. It is over Westminster Bridge, at a place called Marsh Gate.

* * * * *

"Boarding-schools are the very vilest things you can send a girl to. As for that one at Thorp Arch, it is a regular sink of iniquity. When we were at Thorp Arch they used to tie letters to the balls they used in the playground and throw into the young gentlemen's playground, and so they kept up a sort of flying 2d. post. A pretty place for a young lady to go to; it would be far better and *cheaper*, I should think, to have a governess for Jane at home, as everyone does nowadays. I am to leave a little room for Mr. Sass to write, so I must conclude now. Give my best love to father, and tell him I shall get out as much as I can. Also my best love to Jane, Charles, and everybody I know at Harrogate.

"Your affectionate, dutiful son,

"W. P. Frith."

My next youthful epistle relates to a journey from the little village of Willingdon to Hastings on horseback, and my criticism of a collection of pictures reminds me of similar ignorant judgments of the young critics of to-day.

"London,
"Sept. 2, 1836.

"My dear Mother,

"Before your letter reached me I had started for Brighton, where I spent two or three very pleasant days. The only thing that diversified my country excursion was my trip to Hastings, which I enjoyed very much. It is a delightful place, situated beautifully among the hills; it is about twenty miles from Willingdon, and, uncle having procured me a horse, the ride along the sea-shore was very pleasant. I stayed there one night, and put up at the Royal Oak, recommended to me by a gentleman I met with at Willingdon called Slye, a very intelligent man for the country; something out of the common, read a good deal, and so on. However, as soon as I got to Hastings, I fed my horse and went over the hills and along the shore to see the place, and returned very much pleased to dinner at five o'clock—dined with a fellow-traveller off a *couple of soles*, a brace of *partridges*, tarts, etc., etc., for which we paid only three shillings each; afterwards came, '*of coorse*,' a glass of brandy and *water*, corresponding with cup of coffee and cigar. Then followed walk on the Marine Parade by moonlight, to stare at the ladies and hear the music; after that, being rather

tired, went home, called the chambermaid, and went to bed. Got up in the morning; 'of coorse' went on to the hills to procure an appetite, and returned with a 'devilish good one,' as the beef, shrimps, etc., etc., did show. But now comes the funniest part of the story. You must know, then, that the Mr. Slye before mentioned had told me of an eccentric character (but a rich man) named Wyatt, living at Hastings (a relation to Sir Jeffery Wyattville), who had a fine house and still finer collection of pictures, which he (Mr. Slye) had no doubt but Mr. Wyatt would show me on mentioning his (Mr. Slye's) name. Accordingly, I determined on storming the old fellow's quarters; and next morning I marched up to his house, which was pointed out to me—a large white house standing by itself just at the entrance to Hastings. I went to the door and rang the bell, and presently a little squat witch-woman appeared, whom I instantly set down as his housekeeper. I told her my story, and she said she was very sorry, but Mr. W. was not at home; so I, of course, prepared to be off, but she (I suppose prepossessed by my appearance) told me, if I would stop a little outside, she would go and see if Mr. Wyatt was to be found. To this I readily agreed (not liking to lose the opportunity), and marched up and down for about ten minutes with my hands under my coat-tails. About the end of that time I happened to cast my eyes up to the windows of the house, and what should I see but this old woman cleaning the windows! with the greatest unconcern leaving me

to cool my heels by walking sentry. 'By the Lord Harry!' thought I, 'if I were near you I'd punch your head through the window, you precious old rip.' Just then the door opened, and Mr. Wyatt appeared. I then told him all about it. He was very polite, and showed me all his—I was going to say *pictures*, but I think I may as well call them *paintings*—the worst trash I ever set my eyes on. All the rooms seemed made to look at and not to use. I made all haste to wish him good-morning, gave a withering look at the housekeeper, who was smirking in the passage, and ran off as quick as I could, little pleased with my visit. Be sure to write very soon. My trip into the country cost about £3.

"I remain,

"Your affectionate and dutiful son,

"W. P. Frith."

"London,

"Oct. 18, 1836.

"My dear Mother,

"I have received all your parcels, letters, etc., quite safe. The cake and cheese are excellent. The ham has not yet been cooked. I am getting on very well with my 'Laocoon;' in about three weeks I expect to have it finished. I like the mackintosh very much, and am very much obliged to you for it. Mind you don't forget the moor game, and when you send them please to remember that my pocket is 'very low,' and that any contribution (voluntary or involuntary is no matter) will be graciously received. Before I had been here six

months last year, I received sundry 'free-will offerings' both from you and pa. Now I am a decided enemy to any conventional custom falling into disuse. I like to see all old practices kept up if they are good ones, and I think that's an *unkimmon* good 'un, so I'll thank you 'just to keep it up, and pass the rhino.' One requires a little encouragement, you know. Father has written my name in that cloak large enough to frighten all the thieves in London; it will be a *werry* good thing if I should happen to be lost on a wet night. The claret coat I can wear in common *indoors* now. Although I have worn him out a good deal, you may put the name and date; it's too much trouble to me.

"Your dutiful son,

"W. P. Frith."

Postscript from Mr. Sass:

"Dear Sir,

"Your son has progressed greatly, and what he does gives me great satisfaction, because he answers fully the object for which he was placed under my tuition. I beg you will give our best regards to Mrs. Frith, and thank her for her kind remembrances.

"Believe me, sincerely yours,

"Henry Sass."

"There now, you see what old Sass says; *that* deserves something, I'm sure.

"W. P. F."

"London,
"1836.

"My dear Mother,

* * * * *

"We went yesterday to St. James's Palace to see the address presented to the King. O'Connell was standing close to us all the time listening to the address, which was read by Abercrombie the Speaker. As we were going out, O'Connell sat down to frank some letters (for Mr. Halse, one of the State pages). He has a strong Irish accent, but he seems a very gentlemanly, good-looking man. This morning we went to the Royal Chapel, and saw the King and Queen. I could not see her very plainly, but she seemed to me a very nice-looking woman. I had always heard she was an ugly woman.

"Father and I dined together yesterday at Mr. Sass's. We pupils have been obliged to attend as witnesses at the Court of Common Pleas against a neighbouring bookbinder, who keeps thumping all day making his books. This was a tremendous nuisance to us; in short, we should have been obliged to leave off drawing, so Mr. Sass brought an action against him, and it was decided in favour of Sass, and the bookbinder has to pay the costs; so we were very merry all day yesterday. I was first to bring the news to Mrs. Sass. The trial made Mrs. Sass very unwell, and winning the cause made her better. Now I must say good-bye.

"From your affectionate and dutiful son,

"W. P. Frith."

I remember to this hour the "thumping" of that dreadful bookbinder, and Sass's pathetic appeal to his pupils to assist him in stopping it, "for," said he, in his peroration, "if my appeal to the laws of my country is unavailing, I must bid you all an eternal adieu, for I shall then be compelled to exclaim in the words of the immortal Shakespeare, 'Othello's occupation is *entirely* gone.'"

In the postscript to a letter to my father at this time, I advise him to "get a publication called the 'Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club.'" I wrote: "You will be very much amused indeed. They are published in monthly numbers at a shilling each. I think there are about eight numbers already published; they are with illustrations in each. I should think you could get them at Wilson the bookseller's. They would make you 'laugh and grow fat.' Goodbye."

Here followeth more about "Pickwick," beloved of my youth, and my—I can't bring myself to say old age—maturer years (by way of compromise).

"Thursday, Nov. 24, 1836.

"My dear Mother,

"I trust ere this you have received a short scratch from me and two numbers of the 'Pickwick Club.' I am sure you will be very much pleased with them. Tell me how you like them in your next.

"In a day or two more I shall finish my 'Laocoon.' Sass seems very much pleased with it, and

your son has had the honour of being praised by two of the associates of the Royal Academy, one of whom —Knight (a son of 'Little Knight, the actor,' who wanted to marry Aunt Scaife, you know)—was a pupil of Mr. Sass; and when he was made A.R.A. came to thank Mr. S. for his education, to which he attributes his success. He told me my 'Laocoon' was 'a beautiful drawing,' and the other, Turner—an engraver—wished me success, and told me I was sure of getting in. Now this is very pleasant; it shows that one has not laboured in vain. I just glanced at the eighth number of the 'Pickwick Club' as I passed a shop-window the other day, and I laughed fit to split my sides. Mr. P. has a servant whose name is Sam Weller" (and here follows a long quotation, concluding with, "and so it goes on; I forget the rest"). "My best love to all.

"Your dutiful son,

"W. P. Frith."

Among a great number of letters from my mother in reply to my own now submitted to my readers, there may be the answer to the foregoing. I cannot find it, but I well remember her appreciation of "Pickwick," and her opinion of the propriety of my devoting so much of my letter to specimens from that work. "I never," said my mother, who, I think, had no sense of humour, "read such nonsense in my life as that with which you have half filled your last letter. Pray don't send any more such stuff to me, and I do hope you don't buy

these things. What good can they do you?" and so on.

Turner, the engraver alluded to in the preceding letter, sat next to me at one of the first banquets that I attended at the Royal Academy. We were both associates, and, consequently, in the most unfavourable positions at the table for seeing and hearing. I found the old engraver somewhat grumpy. Mr. Jones, R.A., in the absence of Sir Martin Shee, was in the chair.

"Look at him, sir; look at him," said the engraver; "there he sits, and here I sit (what an infernal draught there is through that door!). Why, I served my apprenticeship to his father. I remember this one, a boy, sir—a boy. I used to order him about, though I am not so much older than he is, for the matter of that. What was his father? Why, an engraver, of course, or else how could I have been articled to him? Yes, he was a very good engraver, too. You will find his name to lots of Sir Joshua's portraits. Do I remember Sir Joshua? Don't I! Why, I've seen him at that chap's father's place many a time. Ah, and couldn't he find fault if the work didn't please him! I declare to you I saw him shake his trumpet at Jones one day (the father, not this Jones, of course), and we all thought he was going to hit him with it. How tall was Reynolds? Short, sir, short. I should say as nearly your own height as possible. Yes, I should say he always wore a sword, leastways" (*sic*) "when I saw him. His dress—always pretty much the

same; a sort of dark puce velvet, I should say it was."

Turner was short, and lame—one foot perfect, the other very imperfect; indeed, as near an approach to a "club-foot" as possible. The engraver always wore the large cloak common to long ago. Turner's was very long, so contrived—at the risk of constant tripping—as to mask the lame foot when its proprietor desired to keep it in the background. It is told of him that he went into one of the fashionable bootmakers' shops, and, taking a seat, called to a shopman, and asked if he could be supplied with a pair of ready-made "Wellingtons," then commonly worn. To be sure he could; and the engraver literally put his "best foot foremost" to be measured by the shopman, who very soon brought a pair of boots, which were "just the thing." By this time the perfect foot had retired, and its unfortunate companion had taken its place. "It was fun, I can tell you," said the old gentleman, "to see the man's face. At last he says, 'Why, sir, your feet ain't a pair. We can't fit you off-hand,' he says; 'the left wants particular treatment.' Bless you, I often play that trick; it amuses me, and it doesn't hurt them, for they make me a pair after all."

"London,
"Dec. 15, 1836.

"My dear Mother,

"The fortnight has, I think, not yet quite elapsed since I received your letter, and as that is

the appointed time of leave of silence, I must not exceed it.

* * * * *

"Last Saturday the prizes were given away at the Royal Academy. You will know that drawing of *the back*, which is amongst mine at home. You will likewise recollect my opinion of the person who drew it, then. Well, he is now acknowledged to be one of the best draughtsmen in the Royal Academy; and, although he has only made a very few copies in painting, yet he has this year carried off *the first medal*, having for his competitors young men who have been six years in the painting school, and some of them two or three years under various masters.

"You will, no doubt, have seen his name in the papers. He is the only one of Sass's pupils with whom I have any intimacy or friendship, but with him I hope to maintain the same degree of intimacy that I do at this moment to the end of my life. He is universally liked and respected by all, admired for his genius, and beloved for his mild and gentlemanly conduct to everyone. Mr. Sass continually invites him here, and puts him in the honourable class of 'his most talented pupils.' But what is the most extraordinary, he never was under any master for painting, and only a year under Sass. He advises me to do the same; but when father comes to London I will introduce him, and we will talk the matter over. But now, to come to what will be the pleasantest part of it to you, *he is painting my por-*

trait! and as large as life, and by the time father comes to London it will be finished. Mr. Sass has seen it, and likes it exceedingly; everyone says it is *beautifully* painted, of course, and what is more, a *capital likeness*—there's for you! When it is finished I shall make a sketch of it, and send it to you, just to show you the position. He intends sending it to the exhibition, and then I am to have it—there's for you! Tell me in your next letter what you think of that. Your son is honoured by the friendship of the most talented young artist of the present day.

"By-the-bye, I have an anecdote to tell about George Robins. An old gentleman in bob-wig, snuff-coloured coat and black tights was expatiating upon and pointing out the merits of a very large and beautifully-coloured picture. Whilst he was enlarging upon the birth, etc., etc., of the artist, an old lady, who had been listening very attentively, suddenly interrupted the connoisseur by screaming in his ear, 'Rubbins!—Rubbins! is it George Rubbins, the hauctioneer, you means, sir?' 'Rubbins,' said the old gentleman, with a pretty considerable sneer on his countenance; 'who said anything about "*Rubbins?*" I mean Reubens, ma'am.'

"Tell father I am very much obliged for the sovereign. I shall endeavour to deserve all your goodness. Good-bye; my love to all. Believe me,

"Your affectionate and dutiful son,

"W. P. FRITH."

The young man alluded to in the foregoing letter was Douglas Cowper, of whose great ability and death I have spoken in my published volumes, and the portrait that he painted of me is the one prefixed to this volume. Later on I may offer my readers some extracts from my correspondence with one whose memory is still dear to me.

The following contains allusions to Cowper. Of the sincerity of my feeling for him—though expressed in the usual priggishness of that juvenescent time—there is no doubt; though it may appear a little streaked with selfishness arising from my knowledge that the advantage of our friendship was very one-sided:

"London,
"Dec. 23, 1836.

"My dear Mother,

* * * * *

"And now for answering all your demands. In the first place, you wish to know the name of my friend: it is Douglas Cowper. His parents live in Guernsey; what they are I never inquired. He has his brother, who is a medical student, living with him. I am quite anxious to introduce father to him; he is the only one of Sass's pupils with whom I could keep up any acquaintance. Of course, in one's connection with anyone, we look for something in our friend which may advantage ourselves. There must be a reciprocity of feeling between persons; their tastes and opinions must in some degree coincide. So it is with us; we encourage and advise

with each other. Cowper is far before me, therefore his friendship will be of the greatest value to me. He is about nineteen—certainly not more—and one of the cleverest pupils Mr. S. ever had. He has not yet finished my portrait; and he is likewise painting a picture from one of Scott's novels, 'The Bride of Lammermoor.' It is the part where the old nurse is telling all sorts of horrible stories to Lucy Ashton when she is ill, on purpose to drive her deranged. He has not near finished it yet. I dare say Chas. will recollect the part. It was a large silver medal that he got for painting, with the King's head on one side, and the 'torso' (that is, the 'horrible trunk,' as you call the drawing I have made of it, which was sent home with the 'Venus') on the other. I think it is rather larger than the Society of Arts' medal. I have not been able to get a paper with the account of the prizes in; it was only in the *Morning Chronicle*, and Cowper could not get one of them to send to his own home; but there were merely the names without any comment. It is only the grand year—that is, when many more prizes are given—that it is put in the papers. Father will see the medal when he comes. You wish to know if I have heard of Deville the phrenologist. Mr. Sass knows him very well. He is a very ignorant man in all other things, and particularly of the English language. For instance, in examining *some person's head*, he said to some of the bystanders, 'Now ye see this 'ere *horgin*,' pointing at the same time to an immense lump, formed pro-

bably by some unlucky thump, 'this is a wice deweloped; and this,' pointing to another, 'is *wice wersâ*.' *That is positively true.* I take my 'Laocoon' to the Academy next Monday; I have no fear of being turned out. My 'Apollo' will be finished next week. Tell father we all wish him to come to London directly; and when I speak of his coming, Aunt Scaife says with a chuckle, 'You and me will go to the play then, Will.'

* * * * *

"Your affectionate and dutiful son,

"W. P. FRITH."

I think I never had a high estimate of my own personal appearance, but from the following extracts from one of my early letters to my mother it appears I was anxious to improve it in the matter of waistcoats. I find I said: "I am very much obliged to you for the patterns of waistcoats that you have sent; but do you know I have set my heart on a *crimson-velvet* one! Mr. Sass has one, and they are very fashionable and look so well; it won't be much more expensive than another, so do coax father to let me have one, and I will make such a nice drawing for you."

In the same epistle I moralize as follows: I say to my mother, "You speak of the danger of being out late; to me there is not the least danger. If a young man is disposed to go wrong, he can do so in the middle of the day as well as at night; and if he is disposed to go right, those temptations which may

be thrown in his way more at night, instead of tempting him, only tend more to disgust."

I am ignorant of the precise time at which stalls were first established in theatres. In my early days the pit extended from the dress-circle to the orchestra, and it was to that part of the house, impelled by the harmony that existed between the pit and the purse, that I always took my way—but what a way! I have heard thrilling stories of escapes from suffocation or broken ribs in the surging crowds that beset the Lyceum on opening nights, but the danger of those crushes could not exceed that attending some of my juvenile experiences. To reach the pit during the last appearances of Macready was almost as perilous as an ascent of the Matterhorn. From several of those I escaped with blackened arms; but it was in a determined and successful attempt to hear Malibran in "Fidelio" that I really felt I should be crushed to death. After many hours of weary waiting at the pit-door in a dense crowd that extended from the pit-entrance of Drury Lane across Russell Street, a swaying struggling motion showed that the doors were at last opened; then the fight began, and breathing became almost impossible. Many a time during the long passage towards the paying-place did I give myself up for lost. My feet were off the ground, to raise an arm was impossible; and thus, amidst cries and groans, we were borne along. When at last the blessed haven of the pit was reached, there did not appear to be half a dozen vacant places in it; I secured one, and I can even

now, after a lapse of more than fifty years, vividly recall the delight I felt in listening to the incomparable singer. I think the appearance I speak of was the last that Malibran made in London. She went to Manchester, where she was attacked by illness and died at the age of thirty-seven—a period of life so fatal to genius; witness Byron, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Watteau, and others.

I add the following letter to my mother, as it contains an allusion to a death so universally regretted:

"My dear Mother,

"While I think of it let me tell you to tell father that there is another call of the Birmingham railway of £10 a share; there is a notice to that effect lying at uncle's. Only think of the sudden shocking death of poor Malibran! I was tremendously shocked on hearing of it. We are apt to think fellow-creatures like her are immortal, and never imagine how soon they may be summoned to share the common lot. How awful to think that clear, beautiful voice will never again enchant one with its thrilling tones, that all those ornaments to her nature—her splendid talents and cultivated mind—are gone, and herself no more than a clod of clay!

"You have never sent me my shoe-ribbon.

"By-the-bye, I have a joke about Uncle Ade, which I must not forget. Father will recollect the magnificent view that there is from the hill behind uncle's house. Well, we were talking one day at dinner

about the said view, and in the course of conversation I happened to say that it would be a capital place for a camera obscura. 'A cammery obscury!' says uncle. 'What's that? a sort of light-house?' I fancy we did laugh. My best love to all. Good-bye.

"Your affectionate and dutiful son,

"W. P. FRITH.

"P.S.—You will no doubt have heard before you get this about the London University being on fire; one wing is burnt down. Little Henry Sass was there, and brought home several burnt books, maps, etc., as memorials of the fire. The Sasses are all well; so am I. I hope you are better than you have been."

With these extracts I close my correspondence with my mother, not without the hope that students will be impressed with the evidence it contains of the absolute necessity for hard work, if success is to be expected.

After two years' incessant work, partly at Sass's and partly at the Academy, I felt I might emancipate myself from further control, and as I had little confidence in Sass's method of teaching *painting*, I gave my master notice that I no longer required his instruction. I confess I should like to have seen him when he read my letter. The reply to my mother has not been preserved, but I can imagine the indignation with which he would expatiate on my ignorance and ingratitude. The breach would have been irreparable but for the intervention of Mrs.

Sass, who, as the letter which follows will show, entered the arena and pacified the combatants. My mother took my part, of course. Says Mrs. Sass to my mother :

"My dear Madam,

"I was much shocked and grieved when Mr. Sass this morning showed me your letter ; I was not till then aware of what had taken place. Believe me, when I assure you, from a thorough knowledge of his disposition, that he is incapable of intentionally wounding the feelings of anyone, still less yours, whom we have all learnt, through the medium of your excellent son, to love and highly esteem. Think, dear madam, of the cause of Mr. Sass's feeling of irritation (for only with such feelings could he have written so hastily to you) : a youth whom he had watched over with the hope of his being a credit to him in his successful professional career, suddenly avowing himself capable of guiding himself, and declining any further instruction, when he who has guided so many and so long himself, knew he then most wanted his advice and assistance. Is it not a grievance, dear madam, thus to have the credit due torn from us ? I know full well—for I flatter myself that I *do know your dear son*—that this was not the meaning of the incautious words, 'that he no longer wanted Mr. Sass's instructions.' He knows, dear madam, that he would only be at the Royal Academy from ten to three, and that he ought to practise under superintendence before and after that time.

He has seen the difference of the ultimate success of those who too soon throw off the trammels of instruction, and those who bear them till they can be put aside without danger.

"Mr. Sass may be hasty, and, believe me, his words do not always do justice to his heart. It would be a real grief to us all if any unpleasant occurrence should interrupt that friendly intercourse which we look forward to with so much pleasure. Your son is everything the fondest mother could wish; we all esteem his moral worth and amiable disposition. I feel quite certain that you will do me justice in the proposition I make, to let your son come to us on your own terms. And allow me again to assure you that Mr. Sass has all the feeling to prove himself his real friend, and I, dear Mrs. Frith, will be as a mother to him. Mr. Sass, at my urgent request, allowed me to take the pen, and believe me that I express his sentiments, as well as my own, in begging you to accept our kind regards and unfeigned wishes for your happiness.

"Most sincerely yours,

"Mary Sass."

To the above dear "Old Sass" added:

"My dear Madam,

"I cannot allow this letter to be closed without expressing my sincere regret that anything written in my hasty letters should have given you offence. Pray attribute it to the excitement of feel-

ing, at the moment of reading your son's letter, that his words implied ingratitude. On reflection, I am convinced *it is not;* and certainly I should be very sorry that an intercourse so well begun in the most friendly feeling should terminate so unsatisfactorily to all parties. With best regards to your son and family,

"Believe me to be his friend,

"And yours sincerely,

"With every sentiment of respect,

"HENRY SASS."

So peace was proclaimed, and I returned to the Sass roof, where I spent many happy months; drawing in the Academy schools when they were open, and painting at Sass's when they were closed. I cannot be said to have profited by Sass's system of teaching painting, because I never paid the least attention to it, and he soon left me to my own devices, with what he considered the unhappy results that might be expected from such neglect. I was not indifferent to my old master's good opinion, for I well remember the pain with which I heard that he had said that my first exhibited picture—that from the "Lay of the Last Minstrel"—was a "wretched production"—a judgment that cut me to the heart at the time, but was nevertheless perfectly correct.

I doubt if the young artists of the present day speak of the annual exhibition of the Academy with much respect, and still more rarely with the enthusi-

astic appreciation shown in the extracts from the following letter, written by a student whose genius it would be very difficult to match amongst the rising artists of the present day. Hear, O ye aspirants, what Douglas Cowper said of the exhibition of 1837:

"Just home from Exhibition,
"Monday Evening.

"DEAR FRITH,

"How I pity you, miserable mortal!" (I was in the country, portrait-painting), "for three whole weeks doomed to pine for a glimpse of those glorious emanations of genius—now *corpses*, as 'six-foot'" (a diminutive porter at the Royal Academy) "says—at the Royal Academy. No student can surely look at them without feeling at once miserable and happy—happy, I scarcely know why—miserable to think how difficult it would be to equal, how impossible to surpass them! I begin at once about the exhibition because it is uppermost in my mind, and what you are most anxious to hear about; so here goes for my first criticisms on exhibited art. I guess they will be so profound that you will not understand them. Let us begin with Wilkie and his 'Queen.' I am slightly disappointed with its being rather sketchy, and the likenesses not very good. The Queen is, as it should be, the best part of it, very like, and exquisitely graceful and simple, and there is some beautiful painting about it. Take notice of a stool at the Queen's side, which is marvellous.

"There are some pictures more beautiful than any

I have ever seen exhibited. Wilkie's 'Bride at her Toilet on the Day of her Wedding' is the best of his that I have seen in his altered style. The composition is faultless, and as for colour, I should imagine it is *about right*. The bride is standing upright before a glass; an old nurse behind her doing something; her mother is sitting down trying to go off into hysterics; a bridesmaid or two, and some children, and another old woman, make up the composition; a red cloth on a table, partly covered with a muslin one through which you see the red; for painting and colour inexpressible. He has also a portrait of Mrs. Maberley, which is the best in the exhibition. As for a portrait of O'Connell—a whole length—it is one of the finest I ever saw.

"And now for Landseer! who this year leaves himself behind. His finest is, 'There's Life in the Old Dog Yet'—large as life. A man has descended a ravine, down which the stag and two dogs have fallen, and, supporting the head of the dog who is just alive, is bawling out the sentence to those above, and who are not seen. It is very fine. 'The Queen's Pets'—another of his—is very beautiful; but his sweetest picture is 'None but the Brave Deserve the Fair.' In a rocky mountainous country are two stags fighting, one evidently just slipping near a precipice, while the groups of hinds around are beautiful and expressive; it is a perfect gem, for it is a small picture. A Newfoundland dog sitting at the end of a jetty with water actually floating about him, and a portrait of a lady seated with her

feet upon a stool reading, a hound beside her, are worthy of Landseer; the latter very small and gem-like. He has also a large picture of the Marquis of Stafford and his sister—two children—dressing a fawn; whole-lengths, large as life.

"Eastlake has a picture of a lady and a knight before the Battle of Ravenna; it is one of the best things I have seen, and is his only one. Mulready's 'All the World's a Stage' is a wonderful picture for contrast of character; in expression, colour, and drawing also, it is one of the best in the exhibition. C. Landseer has two very clever; he is improving rapidly. Allen's 'Slave Market at Constantinople' is by far the best I have seen of his. Etty I do not think shines much this year, though in his 'Bivouac of Cupid and his Company' his colouring is most gorgeous, and in his 'Prodigal Son' the expression of the head is grand. 'Somnolency' from Miss Burton is good.

"And now for Maclise, to whom I dare say you have been longing to come — I, having heard so much, and having expected so much, was lamentably disappointed. His 'Salvator Rosa painting Masaniello' is certainly worthy of him, as also, perhaps, is 'Olivia and Sophia fitting out Moses for the Fair'; but the 'Christmas in the Baron's Hall' is far from what I expected. The composition is fine, as of course, and the imagination is wonderful; but it is so dreadfully *cut up*, and such lots of white and chalkiness about it, and such want of aerial perspective, that it is quite unpleasant to look

at. You must examine before you can distinguish the groups or even figures, and the faces appear to me careless, and painted without much recourse to models. I thought his picture last year cut up, but it is breadth itself compared to this. I begin to think he will disappoint us all if he does not soon mend. With all this it is a very wonderful picture, and will improve upon acquaintance. Mind, these—as what I say of all others—are first impressions.

"Hart has a nice little thing, called 'A Reading of Shakespeare' and a 'Prophet Ezekiel,' very good in expression. With Knight I am much pleased—solid English painting. He has only one, called 'Saints' Day,' containing many old women with heads very fine and well painted. Cope has made a great step; his picture is the best I have seen of his. Stanfield, Callcot, and Lee—especially the latter—are all very good. Creswick has a beautiful picture, and Sidney Cooper sends his best. Roberts' 'Grenada' is very good; but I don't much admire his work generally. Turner has three, poetical in the extreme, and perhaps less flaring than usual; his distances and composition are wonderful.

"I will now turn and abuse a little, for I assure you there is occasion. Abraham Cooper has, in my opinion, some of the vilest things Academician ever painted; the horses very good, but as to the figures, Herring's are good in comparison. Old Ward has abortions enough to frighten one, and some, forsooth, with a glass before them, for fear, I suppose, that some indignant person should make a dash at them.

Howard almost as bad as ever, and these hang in some of the best places. Drummond is middling. Knight has some very good portraits. Neither Phillips, Briggs, nor Pickersgill shine much. Leslie is inimitable—a scene from the 'Merry Wives of Windsor,' not in the play, but supposed to take place. I do not like Falstaff much, but the expression of one of the wives—and, indeed, of both, and Slender's—are perfection. They have hung it next to one of Turner's fires, which kills it. Reinagle has one or two good portraits, and some infamous. The President has a good portrait or two. Witherington has some sweet bits. Patten's picture of the 'Passions,' from Collins's 'Ode,' I did not much like at first, but think better of it now. There is some good painting and expression in it, but I have not examined it properly.

"This, I think, finishes all the Academicians and associates, so now for some of the others. There is a new fellow started into life of the name of Simson; he has been hiding in Rome for years; he has two very clever pictures. Another of the name of Severn has a good picture or two. As for the much-talked-of G. Hayter's 'Queen,' I hate it, and they've hung it just over Wilkie's to improve it. The worst of Wilkie is now, I think, a want of the diversity of character that distinguished his earlier pictures; his faces are mannered.

"There are very few pictures by students or chaps that we know. Kennedy has a thing or two. Redgrave a nice little bit. Alexander Johnstone has some

that, I am told, are clever, but I have not noticed them. Phillips's portraits are both hung high, and I am sure you will be happy to hear that your humble servant's picture is hung better than it deserved to be, just under the line, in the very best company, between Wilkie's 'Queen' and Callcot. I must be egotistical, so will tell you that I have been much complimented—yea, even by Sass, and also by Knight most particularly, all which, you may suppose, I liked, hoping there was truth in it. I am glad it is so near Wilkie's; although, as you may suppose, my picture is killed, yet it will be a lesson to me. I forgot to tell you Webster has a good picture of 'Breakfast.' Morris's gold-medal picture is there, and although he has altered and improved it, it will not do.

"I had a splendid view of the Queen when she left the Academy, being not more than two yards from her as she turned her head and bowed to the crowd. I think her pretty. And now, with best wishes for your speedy and greedy look at the exhibition,

"Believe me, my dear Frith,

"Your sincere friend,

"Douglas Cowper."

CHAPTER IV.

ASYLUM EXPERIENCES.

It is possible that experts could explain to ordinary intelligence the peculiar mental state of the insane which enables the madman to speak rationally on most, if not all, subjects but one. An accidental word in course of conversation may bring the forbidden matter to the disordered brain ; then, in a bewildering flow of inconsequent words, or in acts of violence, the madman is revealed. Can one small portion of the brain be diseased and the rest of it healthy ? If so, why should one spot in the brain be not only abnormal in its action, but also susceptible to false impressions on a special subject ? This condition of many of the insane cannot be denied, and, so far as my experience goes, it has not been explained.

I am old enough to remember the introduction of spirit-rapping and table-turning into this country. America, I fancy, may claim the credit of the invention, as it can of the sewing-machine and many other blessings to the community. Did spirit-rapping proceed from a diseased spot in the Transatlantic brain ? However that may have been, it was distinctly

affirmed in the early time of spirit revelation by knocks on a table that the insane were—of course unwittingly—most powerful mediums; and when I was on a visit at a cathedral town in the North of England, which possessed a large asylum as well as a cathedral, I made one of a party of gentlemen who visited the asylum with a view of testing this extraordinary gift.

Our host on the occasion was a Dr. G., who was chief physician, assisted by another and younger doctor, who was, I think, a resident in the building—a public institution, and called the County Asylum. Five or six of the patients, who looked just as sensible as ordinary people, and much more so than some geniuses of my acquaintance, sat with us round a table, our hands touching each other in the fashion appropriate to a *séance*. I should premise that the madmen were informed of their being the possessors of the spiritual power; and to a request that they would join in the exhibition of it, they consented with much good-humour; but I thought I saw an expression on more than one face that denoted supreme contempt for people who could believe in such nonsense. Two or three of our party—sane, I believe, in other matters—religiously believed in table-turning; but amongst our mad friends I am sure there was not one mad enough to think that anything would come of our experiment, and nothing did come, though we sat for more than an hour waiting for the development of our insane companions' supernatural powers.

We rose from the table at last, and, as Dr. G. was thanking his patients for their attendance, one of them, a man who looked like a grave clergyman, said to me :

"Are you a Magistrate, sir?"

"No," said I, "I have not that honour."

"Nor a Commissioner in Lunacy?"

"No."

Here the grave man produced some papers and a pencil.

"You are no doubt aware that if you are in possession of information incriminating a high official who has abused his position, his public position, sir, in a place like this—trustworthy information which can be sworn to—it is your duty as a citizen to report it to the proper quarter."

I muttered something in reply.

"Sir, I rely upon you. No one regrets more than I do the necessity for this exposure, but I must not shrink from it. Sir and gentlemen—for I address you one and all—Dr. G., than whom a kinder man and, I believe, a more able physician does not exist, is in the habit—the never-to-be-sufficiently-deplored habit—of borrowing money from his patients in this asylum. I myself have lent him large sums—more, I assure you, than I can afford to lose—and he turns a deaf ear to me whenever I ask to be repaid. There is scarcely a patient under his care to whom he is not indebted for sums—often quite insignificant—halfpence even. 'All's fish that comes to his net.' Ha! ha! Excuse my hilarity; this is a grave matter indeed. No one ought to laugh."

Here the grave man looked savagely round at his insane friends, who were in no disposition to laugh, for they seemed afraid of this extraordinary creditor.

A dead silence succeeded, during which the patient was busy with his pencil and paper, apparently doing long sums in addition.

"Well, Dr. G.," said the junior physician, assuming an official air, "what have you to say to this charge?"

"Not guilty," said Dr. G. "Still, if my friend says I owe him money, if he will let me know the amount it shall be paid. What does my liability amount to by this time, Mr. ——?"

"With interest at the rate of sixty per cent., as agreed, you now owe me forty-two million five hundred and twenty-three thousand pounds eleven shillings and a penny."

"Well, I can't pay that," said Dr. G., "so I must take the benefit of the Act."

"What! and cheat me out of my hard-earned savings?"

"We will talk this matter over presently," said Dr. G. to the grave man; "these gentlemen are rather in a hurry."

"Now bear in mind," said the mad creditor, turning to us, "you have all sworn to see justice done to me, and if you fail, may——"

Here followed an amazing torrent of expletives that are better imagined than written, in the midst of which two of his brother madmen, after telling him to "hold his jaw," led him away.

After our futile *séance* we went over the asylum,

with the experience common to those who visit such sad places, and were not sorry to find ourselves comfortably seated at the luncheon-table of the chief physician. A guest had been added, a tall military figure, introduced to us as Colonel X.

"An amateur artist," whispered G. to me; "really clever. You shall see some of his work after lunch. Yes, he is a patient, but quite harmless. Very fond of art. Goes to all the exhibitions quite alone; always finds his way back. Quite happy here."

In introducing me Dr. G. told the Colonel that I was an artist, a fact of which he was not previously aware, in common with most other people, for I speak of "long, long ago." The nature of my pursuit made me an object of interest to the military guest, and during luncheon he gave me much sound advice; but he recommended me to devote myself to a style of art for which, I grieve to say, neither nature nor education had fitted me.

"You are young; now let me advise you to devote yourself to the very highest branch of the art. Seek your inspiration in the classics. Take your subjects from Homer, Eschylus, Euripides, and the like. Realize for the world the thoughts, the dreams, of those great men. Do not degrade yourself and your art by following in the miserable footsteps of your contemporaries of the present day; my dear young friend, they are lost souls, every one of them. What can be more degrading than the devotion of God-gifted talents to the chronicling of scenes of everyday life?" (What degradation I have

gone through since that time!) "Take warning from that miserable man Hogarth, a painter of puppets, whose vulgar pranks amused people as dissolute as themselves; and by Wilkie, whose misdirected abilities were employed in depicting the amusements or the wranglings of peasants, as unpicturesque in appearance as they are uninteresting in their employments. Wilkie does better now. Witness his 'Columbus,' and his 'Napoleon and the Pope'; but still he is far wide of the subjects I recommend to you."

After giving me some very sensible advice as to methods of study, the Colonel continued:

"Cultivate your mind; make yourself acquainted with intellectual effort in every direction. Leonardo da Vinci was a painter, a poet, and an engineer, and, I believe also, an astronomer. Michael Angelo was not content with painting the walls and ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. He first built it when he built St. Peter's; and it is melancholy to reflect that we have now living amongst us but one artist who is a great painter, a great poet, and a great engineer. I need scarcely tell you—an artist—that I refer to Mr. Watts."

"That Mr. Watts is a great painter I know very well," said I; "but I never heard that he was a great poet, unless you mean in his pictures, and I know nothing of his engineering fame."

"Is it possible!" exclaimed the Colonel, in an irritated tone. "Why, where can you have been all your life?"

"I have been in London part of it, and I know

Mr. Watts's pictures, though I have not the honour of his personal——"

"And you don't know—you have never read his hymns? I thought any child would be able to repeat 'How doth the little busy bee,' and 'Let dogs delight to bark and bite.'"

"Oh, Watts's hymns! Oh yes, I am acquainted with them."

"Then what do you mean by denying that Mr. Watts is a great poet? Perhaps you will deny that that great genius is an engineer in the face of his having invented the first steam-engine!"

"Yes," I said, "I do deny that: it wasn't Watts; it was *Watt* who invented——"

"Bless my soul," said the Colonel in a loud voice, "what trifling is this? Do you dare to endeavour to take from the reputation of a great man by denying one of his chief accomplishments? You ought to be ashamed of yourself. I will no longer sit at the same table," said the angry Colonel, as he rose from his seat.

"What is the matter?" said Dr. G. "What has Mr. Frith been denying, Colonel?"

"Sir—Dr. G.—you introduced this gentleman to me as an artist. He may be one; but he is so ignorant as not to know, and so rude as to contradict me when I tell him, that Mr. Watts, the painter, is also the author of the hymns, and the inventor of steam; and unless he will instantly apologize, I decline any longer to sit——"

"How can you be so unreasonable, Mr. Frith,"

said Dr. G., as he winked at me, "as to deny what everybody knows but yourself?"

"I am very sorry if I have offended; and if I have annoyed Colonel X., I hope he will accept my apology."

The apology was graciously accepted, and the Colonel sat down again; but he could not recover his self-possession, and presently became very wild and incoherent—so much so, that Dr. G. went to him, and, after a short, whispered conversation, they left the room together.

"That Watts business was unlucky," said Dr. G., when he returned. "The Colonel says he felt he couldn't breathe the same air with a man so ignorant as you; but he wishes you well."

I feel I owe another apology; and that is to Mr. Watts, who will, I hope, forgive the introduction of his name, if only on the ground of the absolute truth of this anecdote.

I often saw the Colonel afterwards at various exhibitions. He did not, or would not, know me. He was always alone; and his remarks, which were uttered loud enough to be heard by a bystander, were amusing enough, or would have been, to all but the painter of the picture the crazy critic was looking at.

"What infernal fool painted this, I wonder!" I heard him say one day; then, with a glance at his catalogue, he added: "I thought so. Just what one might expect from such a vulgar idiot as he is!"

The poor Colonel died a few years ago, hopelessly, but harmlessly, insane.

Some time since I became acquainted with an artist, a Scotchman, named Gow—no relation to my distinguished friend, whose works are the delight of the exhibition-frequenters of to-day, but an equally amiable and worthy fellow.

Gow was a man of but moderate ability as a painter; but as a draughtsman he possessed much power. Though he drew good likenesses, and, I think, exhibited occasionally, he never succeeded in "making a name;" and, I fear, lived and died poor. He was a good deal occupied at one time in making drawings for surgical works, anatomical figures, dissections, and the like; and great were the numbers of asylums, in London and out of it, that he visited for the purpose of drawing different phases of insanity, as shown in the faces of the patients; and I need scarcely tell my reader that madness is as palpably evident in some faces as it is so wonderfully hidden in others.

Gow was one of the most truthful of men. I have his word for the veracity of that which I am about to tell, strange as some part of it is; and I ask my readers to believe all he says as firmly as I do.

We have, unhappily, several instances of insanity in artists and teachers of art, rendering, in some cases, confinement necessary. Gow's frequent visits to Bedlam brought him into contact with almost every variety of madness—from the raving maniac in his padded room, to the melancholy creature

sunk in hopeless imbecility. Strange to say, the most violent would sometimes be calm for a while when the object of the artist's visit was explained to them. He had experienced instances of men whose ravings he could hear as he approached their cells, ceasing their cries, and after listening patiently to a keeper, they would nod good-humouredly, and sit or stand quietly till their likenesses were taken. On one occasion my friend was admitted to a man in solitary confinement who had torn his clothes to pieces; and at the moment the artist entered the cell, the madman was engaged, having previously filled his mouth with ashes, in drawing faces with his tongue upon the wall. His mouth was blackened and his face smeared. After listening to the artist, he allowed the attendant to wipe his face; and he stood quite quietly for three-quarters of an hour, looked at the drawing when it was finished with apparent interest, and made some just and sensible remarks upon it. He then shook hands with the artist, who had not gone ten paces from the door of the cell before the awful ravings recommenced.

All exhibitors at the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy receive tickets of admission to the soirée; and it was about a year after the experience I have related that Mr. Gow made one among the crowd of the Academy's guests. He was speaking to a friend, when a distinguished-looking man, dressed and gloved to perfection, addressed him.

"How do you do?" said the gentleman. "Don't you remember me?"

"No," said Gow; "I can't say I do."

"That is strange, considering you once took my likeness."

"Did I?" said the artist; "then I ought to recognise you. May I ask when and where I took your portrait?"

"At Dr. ——'s asylum, when I was very ill there. Don't you recollect? Look well at me now."

Gow looked; and at last, though a moustache had been added, he recognised the madman of the ashes.

"Yes," said the gentleman, as Gow acknowledged his forgetfulness; "I am all right now, thank God! and I trust I have no reason to fear a return of my illness."

It required all my faith in my friend's truthfulness to enable me to credit this story. It seemed to me, as it will, I think, to some of my readers, impossible to realize a condition of brain which, being thoroughly diseased, could retain powers of memory and observation only consistent with a rational state.

Strange as was the story, I never doubted it; but many of those to whom I have related it were very sceptical as to its truth, when I found my friend's veracity very satisfactorily confirmed by an unimpeachable authority.

Some years ago I had occasion to visit an asylum near London, which was the temporary home of a friend; and in course of conversation with the resident physician, who is also proprietor of the

asylum, I told him of the man with the ashes, and asked him if a recognition of a person whose acquaintance the patient had made under such strange circumstances could be possible.

"Very possible, indeed," said Dr. ——; "there is not the least reason for doubting your friend's story."

My memory supplies me with another artistic experience of the strange mixture of reason and no reason. My friend shall relate it in his own words as nearly as I can remember them.

"I had tried two or three times," said Gow, "to get a patient at Bethlehem to sit. His face was much wanted, as it was the index, in quite a remarkable degree, of the peculiar form of insanity from which the man suffered. He was a surly, obstinate kind of fellow, and always refused to sit; till one day, when he had been so violent that the keepers had been obliged to put him into a straitwaistcoat, then, with the inconsistency of these people—the punishment seeming to have put him in high good-humour—when I spoke to him, he consented at once. There were several insane people in the ward with my model, as well as a couple of keepers, who had been obliged to use the straitwaistcoat. The man stood capitally. I soon made a satisfactory drawing. When it was finished, the mad people crowded round one of the keepers, who was explaining to them the merits of the likeness, as he held it for their inspection. Suddenly my drawing flew in one direction, and the keeper in

another. The madman had watched his opportunity ; and when the keeper's attention was diverted, he flung himself at the officer and knocked him down. The keeper picked himself up, and shook the man good-humouredly.

"'That was a very cowardly trick of yours,' I said to the madman. 'You waited till the officer was occupied with my drawing, and when he couldn't see what you were about, you knocked him down.'

"'Really,' said the fellow, 'you are a clever chap, you are! Do you suppose he would have stood still for me to upset him if he had known I was going to do it?'"

If I remember rightly, my friend's chief drawings were made from criminal lunatics, of whom he had strange tales to tell. In a fit of insanity, a Frenchman committed such a terrible murder in London as to cause his confinement "during Her Majesty's pleasure," which, being interpreted, means, in most cases, imprisonment for life. This man had been an art student in Paris, and though he afterwards adopted another means of livelihood in London, his liking for drawing and painting remained, and was, no doubt, a great solace and amusement to him in prison. Brushes, canvases, and colours were supplied, and the artist produced some pictures which, considering he was denied the use of models and other aids so necessary to our work, were very remarkable, but in every instance showed evidences of insanity.

One day Gow found the Frenchman at dinner with his fellow-prisoners. My friend had been at work during the morning, and, at the request of the prisoner, he produced his drawings.

"Those fellows look mad, every one of them," said the Frenchman. "You English artists know not how to choose your models. If I could be allowed here the models I want I should astonish you at your salon; but," seizing his right-hand neighbour at table by the back of his neck and twisting his head round, "what could any artist make of such an ugly fellow as this—or of this?"

So saying, he applied the same treatment to his neighbour on the left. Both patients bore this practical way of proving difficulties with perfect good-humour.

"Wait, cher confrère," said the artist, "I have done my dinner. Come with me to see my picture; it shall surprise you."

The picture—a Scripture subject—had considerable merit, which was not allowed to be hidden, for the Frenchman was extolling his performance with French volubility, when his attention was drawn to a small gray fly or insect of some kind, which, on wandering over the picture, had been caught on the half-dry colour.

"Ah, see you! Look there; he has come. He has dare to come; but he shall never go to hell any more. See how I put an end to him."

At this moment the fly freed itself, and flew away. The Frenchman tore his hair.

"Ah, malheureux! he has escape; it was the devil in the shape of a fly. He often come to me so. Oh, malheureux! I should have stop all the evil in the world. What a pity — what a pity!"

In common with most people who can tell a story pretty well, I have a horror of telling the same story to the people who have heard it already. I committed that crime once—I hope only once—in my published reminiscences, and I most sincerely hope that I am not about to sin again in closing these asylum experiences with an anecdote so good that I, for one, don't care how often I hear it.

The Duke of Gloucester, one of the sons of George III., was a most amiable prince, but his intellectual powers did not keep pace with his amiability; so inferior were they, indeed, that he earned for himself the sobriquet of "Silly Billy." He was, I have been told, always foremost in works of charity—visiting hospitals, workhouses, and asylums, ready with aid for misfortune or sickness.

On an occasion of a visit to a well-known establishment for the treatment and safe custody of the insane, the Duke impressed upon the physician who conducted him his great desire that he might be allowed to see every patient, and be told every particular concerning him. This was done, and the Prince prepared to depart.

"Now, you have kept nothing back from me, eh? I have seen every one of them, have I, eh?"

"All, sir, except one—a painful case, which, I think, is not fit for your Royal Highness to——"

"Why not—why not? What's the matter?"

"Sir, the patient is so violent that it would not be safe for your Royal Highness to enter his cell; he has attacked almost every warder in the asylum, and nearly killed one of them. He will not wear any clothes, and if the walls of his cell had not been padded, he would have killed himself long ago; his is one of the most hopeless cases I ever knew."

"Well, but," said the Duke, "can't I get just a peep at him somehow, eh! without his getting at me?"

"Sir, there's a small square opening in the door of the cell, through which he receives his food; it is barred. If your Royal Highness is so very desirous you might——"

"All right. Come along. Where is he?"

The royal visitor was led towards the bottom of a long passage.

"Good gracious! what a fearful howling! Is that the man?"

"Yes, sir, and this is the cell—through that grating you can see the man."

The Duke peered through the bars; the howling ceased, and the madman exclaimed:

"Hollo! why, that's Silly Billy!"

"Good gracious," said the Duke, "he knows me!"

"Oh yes," said the Governor, "he has his lucid intervals."

I am sure those to whom this anecdote is familiar will not be sorry to hear it again, and those to whom it is new will delight in it as I do. Thus I close these asylum experiences.

CHAPTER V.

ANECDOTES—VARIOUS.

I AM not old enough to remember the publication of the early novels of Edward Lytton Bulwer, and consequently am unable to speak of their reception by the public press; but when that gifted gentleman took to writing for the stage, I perfectly recollect the savage attacks that were made upon his dramatic attempts. The critics sharpened their pens, ridiculed what they called his "inflated periods," his "affectation and bombast;" and, after exhausting every conceivable epithet of abuse, begged him to cease from attempts in a line of literary art for which his own want of training, to say nothing of his natural incapacity, totally unfitted him.

Bulwer was, I think, foolish enough to let the critics see how sorely they had galled him; for in an appeal to them, he spoke of their attacks as "checking his ardour, and damping his inspiration."

Bulwer's novels were objects of my youthful admiration. One of my first attempts at illustration was from "Paul Clifford." "Eugene Aram" I worshipped; and I looked upon its author as little

less than a god. I was therefore prepared to receive the plays with enthusiasm; and on the first night of the "Duchesse de la Vallière," the palms of my hands were made to sting as I helped to drown the hisses with which that unfortunate play was received. The "Sea-Captain" was equally unfortunate.

There is no doubt that Bulwer had, in some way or other, made himself personally offensive to the critics; but, whether or no, he became fully persuaded that no play written by him, however good it might be, would be allowed to succeed upon the stage.

Acting upon this conviction, he, in counsel with Macready, who always played the hero in his pieces, determined to produce his next dramatic attempt anonymously. Happy thought! The subject fixed upon was "The Lady of Lyons;" and when the play was produced—about the year 1842, I think—the authorship was known to two persons only—Macready and Bulwer. Dickens was the intimate friend of both actor and writer; and on the invitation of Macready he took his place amongst the audience on the first night in total ignorance of anything and everything connected with the play. The curtain fell to a storm of applause. Dickens went delightedly behind the scenes to congratulate the great actor on a well-deserved success.

In Macready's dressing-room Dickens found Bulwer, looking, as he thought, a little disturbed.

"A capital play! good idea—well and dramatically

worked out. The author, a young fellow, I suppose, has been looking a little at our friend here?"—indicating Bulwer. "If this is his first work, I predict a fine future for him; as for you, my dear Macready, you are in for a long run, depend upon it." Then, turning to Bulwer, Dickens said, "Did you see the play from the front? I did not notice you amongst the audience."

"No," said Bulwer; "I saw quite enough of it from the wings."

"Well," exclaimed Dickens, "are you not satisfied with it?"

"Not a bit of it," said Bulwer. "It was capitally acted, fortunately for the author. Without our friend here, it might have been a hideous failure."

"My dear Bulwer, if I did not believe you to be free from the slightest tinge of jealousy of other writers, what you have just said would make me uneasy. The fellow has written a bright, capital play, and you should be the first to acknowledge as much."

"Not if I don't think so, I suppose," said Bulwer, with a smile.

In telling this anecdote, as well as I can remember, I have used Dickens' expressions as I heard them from his own lips.

The morning following the production of the "Lady of Lyons" was a triumph for Bulwer; who was requested by the papers to take a lesson from a rival who had shown by his admirable play that he had dramatic powers which were conspicuous by

their absence in such works as had hitherto proceeded from the pen of Mr. Bulwer.

As I find myself on theatrical matters, I may here relate an experience which has its comic side. My summer holiday in the year 1865 was spent at Scarborough. That place possesses many attractions, described in glowing language in the guide-books, and therefore unnecessary for me to dilate upon. There is one attraction, however—the theatre—which, unless it is occupied by a London star, is no attraction at all. But on a certain evening a company of amateurs was announced to play "The Lady of Lyons," when, from the position in society of some of the performers, and in the hope of their making themselves ridiculous, the theatre was crammed.

Mr. and Mrs. Sothern with their family were passing some weeks at Scarborough, and we saw a good deal of them. I had noticed the amateur announcement without feeling any temptation to witness the effect of it, when Sothern, after telling me that a friend of his—a Captain Somebody—was cast for the part of Claude Melnotte, begged me to make one amongst the audience.

The amateurs had "troops of friends," who filled the best parts of the theatre to overflowing; and we, having neglected to secure places, were consigned to the back row of the dress-circle. From some cause, which I forget, we reached the theatre too late to witness the opening scenes of the "Lady of Lyons." When we arrived, Claude was on the stage in his

disguise as the Prince—and what a Prince! A very thin young man, wearing a cocked hat like a beadle; his legs encased in white tights, and his feet in Hessian boots; his poor arms hanging meaningless by his sides; his hands *telling*, to use an artistic phrase, red and dark against his white legs; his eyes always looking fixedly on the stage; his lips moving, but no sound coming from them that we could hear.

"Great goodness!" said Sothern, "this will never do; I can't hear a word he says, can you?"

"Not a syllable," said I. "The audience seems easily amused; he would be requested to speak up if he muttered like that in London."

The end of the act was Sothern's opportunity to go behind the scenes, and give some necessary advice to his friend; when he returned, he said:

"I have arranged a code of signals with my friend Claude. He is to watch my white handkerchief, and as I raise it he is to raise his voice; if he sees no signal, he is to conclude that he can be heard by us, and, if so, by all the audience; if his pitch is to be increased, he is to be guided by my handkerchief and the higher it goes the louder he must speak."

The curtain rises. Enter Claude, who, instead of addressing Pauline, stares in our direction—his lips move, but nothing audible reaches us—the white handkerchief appears, it rises slowly, and the actor's voice rises with it.

I fear it is impossible with the pen to give an idea

of the absurdity of the effect. Let the reader imagine the mock Prince's speech, in which he describes his palace by the Lake of Como, beginning in low tones, and, before he has uttered many words in a graduated scale of intonation, ending in a shout, and he will perhaps have a faint idea of the situation. The few Yorkshire occupants of the gallery expressed loud approval. "Ay, that's something loike; we can hear thee noo. That's raight, lad ; give it tongue, mun ; give it tongue." So long as Sothern's handkerchief was held above his head, our amateur shouted to his heart's content ; but when arm-ache made Sothern drop the signal, the actor's voice dropped also, and the graduated scale was resumed. I fear this is not much to tell, but it was irresistibly comic to witness.

Yet another little anecdote in which a theatre figures.

I have spoken elsewhere of the dreadful science of perspective, and of the maddening effect of the study of it ; but I confess, if I had my time to go over again, I would risk insanity for the purpose of acquiring a thorough knowledge of that which is so necessary for complete success in my art. I have seen many pictures—my own amongst them—seriously injured by the neglect, or defiance, of the laws of perspective. Many years ago I became acquainted with an old scene-painter, who, in his youth, had been employed by the original Astley, the founder of the theatre now known, I think, as Sanger's. Mr. Astley was not what is called an

educated man, but he was a very shrewd one; and though he most likely knew nothing of the principles of perspective, or, as he called it, *pre*spective, he was well aware of the necessity for the observance of its rules in the scenery painted for his theatre.

"Now, are you well up in prespective?" was his first question before he engaged his scenic artist.

"Yes, I think so," was the reply of my friend.

"Well, then, recollect that whatever you do for me must have a wister. I don't care whether its buildings, or trees, or what not, I must have a wister."

"A wister," said the artist. "I don't understand. What is a wister?"

"You say you know prespective, and don't know what a wister is! Now, look here—there sits the audience in front of the stage—there is the stage, which is right opposite 'em, a blank wall so to speak. Now, it is necessary that the audience should look right up the stage, miles into the country perhaps, or through a long street, or along lots of columns of palaces, and how are they to do that if you don't give 'em a wister?"

"Oh, you mean a vista?"

"Of course I do; their eyes must be led along into distance, and that's where your prespective comes in."

The manager was right; and unless perspective, aerial and linear, is correctly observed, the scene-painter fails altogether.

There was no speaking by the actors in the Astley

pieces as I remember them in my youth ; they were acted in pantomime, with the assistance of a kind of banner when the exigencies of the play required a communication to the audience for which dumb-show was not considered sufficient ; the actor then advanced to the footlights, and on a piece of cloth or canvas, which he stretched before us, we were informed that "THE TRAITOR IS TAKEN," or "HER FATE IS SEALED."

Ducrow succeeded Astley, and though the horses came into play more prominently in the entertainments, the "blood and thunder" pieces were well to the front, and always played in banner fashion.

Ducrow was a great master in the art of conveying a story by dumb-show ; I can never forget him in a play called "The Dumb Man of Manchester." A murder had been committed, with the dumb man as the only witness. Ducrow acted the stealthy approach of the murderer, the death-struggle, and the inarticulate cries of the victim, in a way to make one's flesh creep ; then came the description of the murderer, when, strange to say, an individuality was conveyed which, with other evidence, led to his conviction and execution.

Just about the date of Ducrow's birthday—an anniversary on which he used to give his supernumeraries what he called a treat down the river—several of the banners so essential to the story of the plays were either lost or stolen, much to the annoyance of the manager, whose language on the occasion of any breach of discipline was unfit for

ears polite. The birthday was some time in August; a boat was hired, the manager took his seat at the prow, and was rowed by his supernumeraries to Greenwich or Eel-pie Island, or to some other favoured locality, where a substantial entertainment was provided. The August day of which I speak was exceptionally hot, and most of the rowers were glad to dispense with their coats. One of them, however, declined to divest himself of his own, though repeatedly asked to do so by Ducrow. "He wasn't particularly hot; besides, he was afraid of catching cold."

The perspiration poured down the man's face, and at last the manager's request took the form of a command impossible to disobey. The coat was sullenly removed, when lo! a missing banner turned into a waistcoat, with "SHE DIES AT SUNRISE" bearing damning evidence across the back.

I suppose if I were at all acquainted with one of the arts of literary composition, I should be able so to connect my anecdotes by an artful thread in their rotation, as to prevent abrupt transition from one to another. I need not tell my readers, what they know already, that I possess no such accomplishment, so they must forgive my shortcomings in that as in many other respects.

That persons from defective education or vulgar surroundings, or both combined, should play havoc with the letter "h" is natural enough, but that men of refinement and culture—like Walter Savage Landor, for example—should continually and con-

sistently either drop their "h's" or put them into the wrong places, is very strange.

We had a notable instance of this unfortunate habit in a distinguished member of my profession, who died some years ago. In ordinary conversation head became 'ead, hand 'and, heart 'art, and there was an end of it; but instances might be multiplied by the hundred in which the neglect of the aspirate changes the speaker's meaning into something ludicrously unlike what he intended to convey. For instance, my "h"-less friend came to visit me at Folkestone when the present Custom-house—which contains a large room for the examination of baggage—was in course of erection. We entered the room, which had just been roofed in.

"What a splendid studio this room would make!" said I.

"Yes," replied my friend; "but it would be a terrible job to 'eat it."

Again, at a large dinner-party at the late Mr. Leaf's at Streatham, given in honour of Mr. Fuller, of Florence, the eminent sculptor, the conversation turned on a pamphlet then lately published, in which it was somewhat ingeniously argued that antique sculpture was constructed on mathematical principles worked out in a series of circles.

"If that is the case," said the "h"-less one, "the absence of all 'art in the antique" (meaning heart) "is accounted for."

"A want of art in antique sculpture," exclaimed Fuller; "there may be a want of passion and action,

both qualities, in my opinion, better avoided in sculpture; but a want of art!—surely you cannot be serious?"

"Ah, but I am, though; antique work is elegant, refined, graceful, and all that, but I say there *is* a want of 'art in it."

Here was an instance of a totally different meaning being conveyed to that intended. Again, in speaking of the Crimean War, my friend said to one who was ignorant of his weakness:

"How splendidly the 'ighlanders behaved, didn't they? Why, if they hadn't stood as they did, where should we have been?"

"Islanders!" said his friend. "Why, the British were all islanders, weren't they?"

"All 'ighlanders — what, the soldiers! What nonsense! there were all sorts; they didn't all wear kilts."

"Oh, I see," was the rejoinder.

I have served with my friend more than once upon the committee of selection for the pictures for the annual exhibition. He was a thoroughly kind-hearted man, and, if he had had his way, very few pictures would have been rejected; his favourite expression was, "I think you are rather 'ard upon that little picture; there is no 'arm in it."

On one occasion there came before us a portrait in which, though the head was pretty well done, the man's figure had been what we call "scamped" to such an extent as to make it doubtful whether the coat covered a human form or not.

"Oh, we may pass that," said our friend; "there's no 'arm in it."

"For that very reason," said the President, "we can't pass it."

Now, my reader, prepare yourself for an abrupt transition.

All sorts and conditions of men, women, and children have sat to me as models. With the religious belief of our models we have nothing to do; but when they happen to be of the Jewish persuasion, personal appearance nearly always settles that matter.

Many years ago, on passing a small shop, I was attracted by a Watteau costume that was displayed in the window, accompanied by some hideous masks and other properties common to the costumier's trade. After the usual haggling I bought the dress, and, as the Jew proprietor wrapped it up for me, I noticed the man's hands, which were as nearly perfect in form and colour—strange to say—as human hands could well be. The shop was a miserable place; midway hung a blanket which partially hid a bed on which lay two children who were being hushed off to sleep by a poverty-stricken mother.

"If any friend of yours is going to wear this dress, sir, they must be very careful, for it's real old—more than a hundred years, I know."

"No," said I; "I am an artist. I have bought it to paint from."

Another glance at the evident poverty about me, and I no longer hesitated to make a request which

experience teaches me should always be carefully considered before it is preferred.

"I am painting a picture just now," said I, "in which such hands as yours would be of great service. Would you have any objection to sit for me?"

"Why should you object to sit for the gentleman, Benjamin?" said his wife, who had joined us. "He looks a generous gentleman. Times are very bad with us, sir. It's all we can do to scrape along—ourselves and two children; and you may be wanting other things in our line. We want to know artists," etc.

A bargain was struck as to terms, and Mr. Moss (an evident abbreviation) proved a capital sitter. His hands frequently, and his face more than once, appeared in several of my early pictures.

Moss's business improved rapidly. I sent some customers, and they sent others; and Mr. Moss entertained serious thoughts of taking a larger shop in a better neighbourhood.

By some curious stroke of fortune, Moss succeeded in securing the "dressing" of a play of Molière's, which was to be acted by the boys of a large public school. Appropriate costumes for each character must be procured; and as Moss had very little of his own, he laid his Jewish friends—some of whom were costumiers also—under contribution "right and left," as he expressed it.

The play was acted with great success, so far as the dresses were concerned; and a few days after-

wards Mr. Moss came to sit for me. The occasion was on a certain Saturday—a very cold Saturday—of the year 1840. My studio—or, as I always prefer to call it, painting-room—was in Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square.

Moss was always punctuality itself.

"Well, Moss," said I, when we had got into full swing of work, "how did the play go off?"

"First-rate, sir. I was there, in course, to dress the boys; but I couldn't understand what they said—it was in French, I believe. But them boys! they may teach 'em French, and all sorts of things for anything I know, but they don't teach 'em how to behave themselves. I never see such a set; and that bad-tempered and violent some of 'em! I was helping one young gent to get his jerkin right; and because it didn't go quick enough, or something, he gives me a punch that doubles me up. I really thought for some time he'd done me a serious injury."

"A young blackguard," said I. "Why didn't you report him?"

"I said I would. I said, 'Your master shall know about your hitting me,' I said; and the rest of 'em gets round us, and they says, 'You are a family man, ain't you, Mr. Moss?' 'Yes,' I said, 'I *h*am.' 'Well, then,' says they, 'you have seen the last of your wife and children,' they says, 'if you dare to say a word against any of us; for we will just knock the life out of you, and render you quite unfit for your domestic dooties,' they says, in those very

words. I assure you, sir, I wouldn't go through what I suffered through them boys again not for double the profits I got out of it."

"You are grasping that sword too tightly, Moss; let the fingers hold it rather more loosely. That's right. Now go on with your troubles, if you have any more to tell."

"Well, sir, I think I told you that, not having much of the costoom myself, I borrowed it from my friends—people of my own persuasion mostly. I got pretty well everything; but there was a pair of Charles II.'s boots as none of 'em had got. They must be had; so I was obliged to get 'em from a big establishment; and as they didn't know me, I was obliged to leave a deposit. Well—would you believe it?—one of them young roughs split both boots right up the back, either in pulling 'em on or taking 'em off. 'Now, which of you gents has done this?' I said, as I was packing up the things. 'Which of us has done it?' says they. 'None of us. You have been trying them on yourself. Oh, Moss! how could you expect those pretty boots to fit you?' 'It *was* Moss,' says one of 'em; 'I see him done it.' That's the way they teach boys to talk and tell lies at that school."

"There," said I, "you're clutching that sword as if you wanted to use it upon one of those boys. Hold it more loosely. Now go on. I hope you made a good profit out of such a disagreeable business?"

"Yes; I did very well. We had settled all

that at first, me and my friends that lent things had. But there was the spoilt boots! However, I didn't spoil 'em, so I wasn't going to lose by 'em; so I wraps 'em carefully up in the same paper as I had 'em in from the big shop, and away I go to return 'em. 'I've brought back the boots what I borrowed the other day, and I'll trouble you for my deposit, minus the sum agreed upon for the hiring,' I said. 'Here's the boots,' I said, tapping the parcel. 'All right,' said the shopman, 'and here is your deposit; and much obliged to you.' I was that thankful the shopman didn't open that parcel, you can't think. I got clear off—they didn't know me from *H*adam; and as I walked—slowish at first, very quick after a bit—I says to myself, 'Ah! I ain't the first of my persuasion as has done one of yours, and I shan't be the last, I hope; for it's often and often you've done us.'"

"That will do for that hand, Moss; you can rest a bit. The shop-keeper who lent you the boots was a Christian, was he not, Mr. Moss?"

"Well, sir, he wasn't a Jew, I should think, because his name was Tomkins, and that ain't a Jewish name, you see."

"Now," said I, "shall I tell you what I also see? and that is, that you have acted abominably in cheating Mr. Tomkins. How can you possibly defend your conduct?"

"Excuse me, sir, I don't see it in that light at all; if, as them imps said, *I* had spoilt the boots, I would have paid for them, so help me; but I didn't, and I

don't see why I should suffer. They wouldn't pay for what they had done, and why should I for what I hadn't done?"

"And why should Mr. Tomkins pay for what he hadn't done?" said I.

"Well, sir, that's his look-out."

"Your morals are not so good as your sitting, Mr. Moss, which, with your permission, we will resume. Come along, you and the sword, a weapon you deserve to have passed through your body. Stop—just look to the fire, will you? Give it a good stirring up, and put on some coals."

"Excuse me, sir, I can't do that," said the Jew.

"Can't poke the fire!" I exclaimed. "What *do* you mean? I've never known you to hesitate in poking the fire before."

"That," said the pious individual, "is because I have never sat to you on a Saturday—our Sabbath. No Jew touches fire on the Sabbath; our religion forbids it."

"You don't say so?" said I; "and pray what would your religion say to your cheating a man out of a pair of boots? Of the two offences—poking the fire and robbery—which is the worse?"

"Ah! but you see it ain't robbery, that's just where it is."

"And may I ask," said I, "how you manage to keep your own fires alight on such a day as this, for instance, without poking? Jews—certainly rich Jews—don't pass their Sabbaths fireless?"

"Oh no," replied Mr. Moss; "the rich Jews make

their Christian servants attend to their fires. Such as me, you know, why, we get a girl—Christian girl—to step in from next door and keep our fires alight."

It is my firm conviction that Mr. Moss was quite incapable of seeing the wickedness of his conduct, or that in cheating a Christian there was anything in his proceeding approaching the enormity of poking the fire on his Sabbath. Being something of a Christian myself, I thought it injudicious to expose myself and my little belongings in my studio to the capricious fancy of a person with such shady notions of *meum et tuum;* I therefore saw as little as possible, after that winter-Sabbath experience, of Mr. Benjamin Moss.

To avoid too abrupt a transition, I will continue my model experiences with a short account of an individual of that species who rejoiced in the name of Black.

Black was a handsome young man, who began life as an errand-boy, continued it as a railway-porter, then as a footman, and afterwards as an artists' model; the last career was pursued for many years—indeed, until Black's good-looks were so damaged by obesity that employment became scarce, and a fresh method of livelihood had to be found. This was discovered in the shape of a public-house in a distant part of the country, where I hope and believe our old model still flourishes. Black was an excellent sitter; no position was too difficult for him; he was good-tempered and patient to a

degree, but he was one of the most depressing persons I ever knew. If he had by chance heard or read—he was a great politician and reader of newspapers—anything unpleasant about an artist or his works, he would take the first available opportunity of beguiling the time of his sitting by giving his unhappy employer the unpleasant information, without having the faintest idea that he was causing annoyance and possibly pain. He was convinced that his position as a model had given him a thorough knowledge of art, and his criticisms were always unfavourable, and sometimes terrible. He said to me one day, as he looked at my work at the close of it:

"I thought you said I suited you exactly for that figure, and that you was going to make him a likeness of me?"

"Well," said I, "what of that?"

"Well, I ain't as ugly as that, I know."

I have said elsewhere that I never read art criticism, but Black did, and he would say:

"I was a-reading the *Athenæum* the other day—last week it was—and they do just pitch into you, to be sure."

"Confound you," said I, "what do you tell me that for?"

"I thought you would like to know, that's all."

I have also said elsewhere that fogs are the great enemies of painters. Black knew that, and he would constantly threaten me with one.

"A fine day this, Black," I said one morning in November. "Capital day for work!"

"Well, I don't know!" says Black. "It was thickish where I come from, and the wind sets in this direction. Shouldn't wonder if it comes over dark presently, just when you are finishing a hye, perhaps."

Black was a healthy young fellow enough, but he was very fanciful about himself; something or other was always the matter with him.

"Them stairs of yours will be the death of me some day; I a'most can't fetch my breath when I gets to the top of 'em; I think there is something amiss with my heart."

On another occasion, after a rather hard day's work, he said:

"This was a tough one. I don't feel as if I could stand many such days' work as this here. I feel quite faint—a kind of a swimming in my head—there is something wrong in my head, I know."

"You feel faint?" said I; "you don't look it; would you like a little brandy?"

"Well, yes—thank you" (Black never said "sir" by any chance); "I think just a drop would do me good."

Another example of delicate consideration:

"You know Mr. So-and-So, he's a great artist, ain't he considered?"

"Why, certainly," I replied; "he is a tremendously clever fellow. What of him?"

"Oh, nothing much. I was a-setting to him the other day, and he was talking about you."

"Was he?" said I.

"Yes, and he says as you don't paint near so well as you used to."

A favourite amusement of Black was to try to frighten his employers about their health.

"You looks uncommon shaky this morning," he said to a friend of mine; "the policeman told me he saw you come in at three o'clock this morning. You can't expect to make old bones if you goes on like that."

Black's offensiveness culminated in an example which he recounted to me without, I believe, the least consciousness of his stupidity.

An old friend of mine was somewhat stout, and had a great dread of becoming so fat as to render him liable to the accidents of apoplexy or other evils to which the obese are subject. Black was occasionally employed as a model by my friend, and on one occasion, after a long silence, Black said:

"I'll tell you what—you seems to me to get fatter and fatter every time I sees you. You'd better look out. My second cousin, a master carpenter he was, fell down dead last Tuesday fortnight, and he wasn't near as stout as you are getting."

This was too much, so I took Black seriously to task.

"And pray what did Mr. L. say to that pretty speech?"

"Well, he says very quiet, he says, 'That'll do for to-day, Black,' he says. I didn't half like it, because he only paid me for half a day's work."

"And if he had broken your head he would have

served you right. You are in the habit of telling people all the unpleasant things you can think of. If you go on in this way, you will lose your sittings."

"Well, I don't much mind. I have had pretty near enough of it, and I never say nothing to offend nobody."

"And let me tell you," added I, "that you are getting very fat yourself; it's the lazy life you lead. How would you like to be told you are likely to drop down dead, you awful stupid?"

"Shouldn't mind a morsel," said Black; "nobody can't know nothing about such things."

It is a far cry from a model of the present day back to one who sat to Reynolds—a very different model to Black, for the person of whom I am about to write was the Countess of Burlington, and the painter to whom she sat in old age was Sir Francis Grant, after — in her youth — having sat to Sir Joshua.

The council-room of the Royal Academy at Burlington House is one of the few portions of the old building that were permitted to remain when the new galleries were erected; it is a quaint room with elaborately painted ceiling and two tall windows, and it contains some interesting relics of past times—palettes, and portraits of dead and gone painters, drawings, engravings, etc.

"It was in this room," said the President, "that I painted old Lady Burlington when I came to London quite a young fellow, with my pocket full of introductions from Sir Walter Scott and others to a

variety of great folks. The portrait of Lady Burlington was my first picture in London. I had one of the windows covered, and Lady Burlington sat at some little distance as I worked away at her likeness.

"'Why do you keep your picture at a distance from me?' said the old lady. 'Sir Joshua's canvas was close to me; he took quite a quantity of exercise when he painted, for he continually walked backwards and forwards. His plan was to walk away several feet, then take a long look at me and the picture as we stood side by side, then rush up to the portrait and dash at it in a kind of fury. I sometimes thought he would make a mistake and paint on me instead of the picture. He was very deaf. No, I did not care much for him; he was *a very pompous little man*.'"

That these were the very words of Lady Burlington I have no doubt, as the occasion was too interesting for Grant to have made any mistake. The habit of keeping sitter and canvas in close proximity is one I always adopt when I am asked to paint a portrait; that the result is very different from that produced by Reynolds is not the fault of the *habit*.

Talking of *habits* (note the ingenuity with which I lead up to the following anecdote), drunkenness is very uncommon amongst artists. In the course of my life I have known but one victim of the habit, whose name would be familiar if I were to mention it; there may have been—no doubt there are—others, but the fatal propensity precludes the possibility of lasting success, to say nothing of eminence.

Poor Morland was a terrible example; and what an artist he was, even in his cups, the abundance and excellence of his works sufficiently prove; what he might have been if his frightful propensities had not been indulged in to the shortening of his brilliant life, it is sad to think of.

The site of part of the United Service Club was once the residence of my old friend Mr. Humby, well known as a fashionable bootmaker; he had married the sister of Egg, R.A., the latter also my old friend and fellow-student. Humby—I don't know if he still lives, I hope he does—was a great and intelligent lover of art, and an intimate friend of many painters. Many a pleasant dinner took place in the little dining-room at the further end of the shop; John Phillip, poor Dadd, Egg, I, Reynolds the engraver, and others for guests. The dining-room was somewhat dark; it was filled with Humby's purchases from his artist friends; but their beauties were difficult to discover in the daytime, for the only means of illumination came from a dead wall opposite the window, which had been whitened to increase the reflected light. Useful, no doubt the white wall was, ornamental it was not; but so much the reverse that we resolved that means should be taken to render it less offensive to those whose fate condemned them to look into its face at dinner.

"What is the matter with you, Dadd? You have been staring out of the window for the last five minutes without uttering a syllable," said Humby.

"Yes," was the reply; "I have been looking at that dashed wall, and thinking whether something can't be done with it. Look here," turning to Egg, "suppose you and I set to work and paint it over with something—a view of Vesuvius, with a Festa going on, figures dancing, mandolins, vines, and all that sort of thing! What do you say?"

"All right," said Egg; "a capital idea! Keep a light effect, so as not to diminish the reflection much. Humby will get the surface prepared for painting upon."

"To be sure I will," said our host.

The area between the dining-room window and the wall was boarded over, and the two artists went merrily to work. The Festa was nearing completion, when a customer of our friend the bootmaker entered the shop, produced the account that had been sent to him, and paid it. As Mr. Humby was writing the usual receipt, the gentleman caught sight of the artists, who were busily engaged.

"I see you have got painters at work," said the customer.

"Yes," replied Humby.

"Ah! I wish you well rid of them; they are a sad, drunken lot."

"Thank you, sir," said the bootmaker.

Readers of my Autobiography may remember a Mr. Birt, who makes a somewhat eccentric figure in the book. That gentleman was a great lover of animals, more especially of dogs. The passion of love ennobles humanity; but it is often destructive of

dogs, for an undue indulgence of affection for the favourite leads to an excess of feeding, and an absence of exercise, which constantly shorten life. I should be afraid of being believed if I were to record the number of little dogs, always of the expensive spaniel breed, that lived and died beloved of Birt during the years in which I was honoured by his acquaintance. And the curious rapidity with which the love was transferred from one dog to its successor! I wondered—and one day expressed my wonder, on hearing my friend bemoan with tears in his eyes the loss of "darling Rose"—that he did not call upon the taxidermist to use his skill in preserving the outward and visible form of the dear little creature who could "almost speak, don't ye see, Frith."

"Well, no," said Birt; "the true way to assuage one's grief for such a loss is to replace the lost one as soon as possible. I have been greatly tried by the death of my favourites, as you know; but I have got to love another very soon. No; I can't think I should like a stuffed dog. I should miss all its pretty tricks and ways. I am not sure I shouldn't get to hate it; for I could not love two dogs at the same time."

"Do you think the affections of all dog-fanciers are so transitory?" said I.

"Yes," was the reply; "I do. And once, when I really had a fancy to preserve a favourite by stuffing, I went to a man famous in that art, and told him what I wanted. His terms were high; but I

agreed to them. 'I will send the body,' said I. 'Thank you, sir,' said the man. 'You will please to observe that it is our custom to be paid in advance.' 'Why in advance?' said I. 'Because,' said the man, 'we find the love of people for their pets is so short-lived, that it does not last till the operation of stuffing is finished; and we were obliged to make payment in advance our rule, because on several occasions persons repudiated their engagements on the plea that we had sent home the wrong dog—it was none of theirs.'"

Life would no doubt be unendurable if a certain amount of hypocrisy in our intercourse with one another were not permissible and even laudatory. A palace of truth would be a dreadful place to live in.

Mr. Birt gave constant dinner-parties, and the dog of the hour perambulated the dinner-table, making himself acquainted by means of his detestable nose with every dish and plate upon it. I dined frequently in Sussex Gardens, and soon discovered a way of inducing the dog to give me and my plate a wide berth—a simple plan, merely watching my opportunity, and when the inquiring nose approached my food, it encountered the sharp prongs of my fork.

Dogs are possessed of memory as well as many other faculties that we little dream of. That "Ducky," as one little beast was called, remembered my fork I had comforting proof by his carefully avoiding me ever afterwards.

Now, I would not believe any man on his oath who said he liked to have a dog walking about a dinner-table—I mean, of course, somebody else's dog; and yet what exclamations of delight have I heard from men and women! and how the latter especially have fed the creature from their plates with smiling faces, but hoping that he might choke on the spot!

Fielding says parents should never produce their children to their guests after dinner, because, however delightful those creatures are to the authors of their being, they are a nuisance to everybody else.

With what secret joy, which hypocrisy changed into commiseration, was I once witness to an accident to "Ducky," which, but for untimely interruption, would have proved fatal!

On the day marked by this interesting event, the weather had been very wet; indeed, for some time previously the rain had been incessant. The month was May; and the Academy Exhibition, then in Trafalgar Square, was open. Just as I arrived at the bottom of the steps leading to the National Gallery, Birt's brougham drew up, and Mr. Birt stepped out, with Ducky in his arms. Birt was slightly lame; he stumbled, and the dog fell into a mass of mud, which had been collected at the pavement-side by street-sweepers, at least a foot and a half thick—at any rate, so thick that Ducky disappeared completely. There are emotions that so unnerve, so stagger a man as to render him unable to move; he stares vacantly, but cannot stir. Such

was the case with my friend; but unhappily the condition, so terrible under some circumstances, did not last long enough—love of the dog and terror for its impending fate resumed their sway. Birt made a plunge into the mud, rescued his favourite in a plight that may be imagined, and in that condition, regardless of a splendid dress which adorned the lady, he was flung *into Mrs. Birt's lap* (I, who write, am ready to make oath and say that I saw this done). Hurried orders were given to the coachman, who drove rapidly homewards, where a warm bath, as I afterwards learnt, with other appliances, saved the valuable life.

The great Duke of Wellington is reported to have said to a person who gave him an incredible account of something he had witnessed, "Well, if you say you saw that, of course I must believe in it; but if I were to see it myself, I certainly shouldn't."

I am about to close the history of Ducky with an account which I should blame no one for disbelieving; but which is, nevertheless, perfectly true. Ducky did me the honour to sit, or rather stand for me, for my picture of "Honeywood and the Bailiffs," now in the Sheepshank's Gallery at South Kensington. *He*—or was it *she ?*—is advancing upon the bailiffs with the stately step that used to bring her to our plates at dinner. Mr. Birt had an objection to dogs' collars—why, I know not; and I was therefore surprised to see Ducky's neck ornamented with what seemed to me a dog-collar on one of the occasions of Mrs. Birt's bringing her for a sitting.

"I thought you objected to collars for dogs, Mrs. Birt?" said I. "I see Ducky sports one to-day."

"Oh no!" said the lady; "that is not a dog-collar—it is only a piece of flannel. You see, the poor dear has had a bad cold and sore throat ever since that dreadful accident in Trafalgar Square, and we have had flannel round her neck night and day."

"But that," said I, examining the collar—for collar it was, though of flannel, and not wider than broad tape—"that is surely too narrow to do any good?"

"Oh! but it was much wider, of course! We have gradually lessened it; she is leaving it off by degrees."

Here my curtain drops, and a new act begins.

It would take a long time, I imagine, and certainly an abler pen than mine, to enumerate the variety of qualities of mind and heart that are essential to the character of a "true gentleman." About one quality—namely, a constant consideration for the feelings of others—I think there can be no doubt. The practice, invariably observed in my young days, of the newly-elected associates of the Royal Academy calling upon all the Academicians after they are elected into the body, and thus making the acquaintance of the older members, seems, if I may judge from the few associates who call upon me, to be fast sinking into disuse. This I, for one, much regret. No doubt unpleasant consequences sometimes arose from these visits. An abrupt "You have nothing

to thank me for—I didn't vote for you," was disagreeable enough; but what I am about to relate was more disagreeable still.

Solomon Alexander Hart was a Jew—the first and, up to the present, the last of his race ever seen in our Academic ranks. The year of Hart's election as associate I forget—if I ever knew it; but it must have taken place about 1830. In the course of the new associate's round of calls, he paid his respects to an R.A. whose name I shall conceal under that of Mr. Christian. This gentleman had the reputation of being a very religious man—a constant church-goer; he also had the reputation of being of an ill-natured and jealous disposition, and famed for saying unpleasant things. Of this, Hart was fully aware; but he was not prepared for so complete an illustration of this habit as his interview afforded.

"Mr. Hart," said the Academician, "I am glad to see you. You must forgive me, sir, if I say that I view your admission into our ranks with disapproval—not, believe me, because I do not admire your art (your picture of Wolsey frowning on Buckingham I thought good—very good indeed); but I cannot conceal from myself that, as your co-religionists are neither admitted to Parliament nor to any offices of State, more especially as they are not permitted to enter the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, your admission to the Royal Academy is—forgive me, my conscience compels me to speak—a matter to be deplored."

"This was a 'facer,'" said Hart, as he related it to me; "but it was nothing to what followed."

Mr. Christian lived in a handsome house in the suburbs, having the advantage of a large garden, in which, on the occasion of Hart's visit, a boy was trundling a hoop. Mr. Christian tapped at the window and called to the boy, who presently entered the room.

"Henry," said the Academician, "I want you to see the new associate, Mr. Hart; this gentleman, Henry, is a Jew. I hope you bear in your mind the lesson last Sunday, in which your mother instructed you so fully on the history of that misguided race. They are spoken of, you know, as 'the wicked Jews.' Wicked, indeed, they were; for the death of our blessed Lord lies at their door. It is to that sect that this gentleman belongs."

"Could anything," said poor Hart, "be more unchristian and cruel than this? It literally maddened me. Whether I said 'Good-day' to the brute or not I don't know; but I declare to you I had the greatest mind to 'call him out.' I could have shot him with pleasure."

Mr. Christian lived to see Hart an Academician; but relations were never cordial between them, and no wonder.

I will conclude what I have to say of Hart with something more agreeable than the above.

On the occasion of a visit of a party of artists to Preston Hall, the pleasant seat of Mr. Betts, they were entertained, as always, in baronial fashion.

At one of the splendid banquets, for which hospitable Mr. Betts was famous, a huge boar's head, with the usual garniture, was placed upon the table. Hart was said to have looked longingly at it, when he exclaimed: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

I hope the anecdote which I introduce in this place will be as new to my readers as it was to me.

In Church Street, Notting Hill, stands the Carmelite Church, where on any Sunday afternoon a more or less good sermon and excellent music may be heard. The preacher is always a monk in Carmelite garb. On one Sunday when I was present, the pulpit was occupied by a foreigner, whose command of English was remarkable. He was very fluent, and extremely impressive. In the course of his sermon, he told us of a certain French Jew who was anxious to fill some position under Government, for which he was well qualified, but debarred in consequence of his creed. On bemoaning his fate to a friend, who was a Catholic, the friend said:

"My dear fellow, why do you allow your religion to stand in the way of your advancement? Change it—change it at once."

"Ah!" said the Jew; "I never thought of that. I certainly will."

He did so, and the valuable post became his.

Shortly after his promotion, he was met by his Catholic friend, who had heard of his advancement; and, after congratulating him upon it, said:

"When I advised you to change your religion, I

meant that you should change it for the only true religion—the Catholic. Now I hear that you have turned Protestant."

"To be sure," said the Jew; "I wanted to be as little of a Christian as possible."

I am nothing if not desultory, and I now touch upon a different matter.

I think Sir Martin Archer Shee, P.R.A., was the first President who, after his election, which took place every year, gave a series of dinners to his brother-Academicians. Those festivals were continued by Eastlake, then by Grant, and now by Sir Frederick Leighton, who, with characteristic generosity, does not confine his hospitality to Academicians only, but includes in his invitations associates, and also those whom we profanely call "outsiders."

These are delightful gatherings, as all who have the privilege of attending them can bear witness. The first at which I had the honour of assisting was one of those given by Sir Charles Eastlake; they were somewhat cold and stately, though occasionally enlivened by the presence of ladies.

The first and only time I met Miss Adelaide Proctor, of poetic fame, was at Eastlake's, and I had the pleasure of taking her down to dinner. Miss Proctor was very charming, but nature had been very unkind to her in respect of personal appearance. I fear it could not be denied that the authoress of the "Lost Chord," and so many other beautiful poems, was a very plain person indeed, but her con-

versation was delightful. Photography, at the time of which I am speaking, was a new art; the conversation turned upon it at dinner, and, as I looked at Miss Proctor, I thought how fearfully she would suffer if she ventured to submit herself to its uncompromising "justice without mercy" treatment. As if she read my thoughts, she said:

"I had my photograph taken the other day, and you never saw such an ugly wretch as they made of me."

I forget what I said in reply, but I muttered something, and the lady continued:

"I remonstrated with the man, and what do you think he said?—'Very sorry, miss, but we can't alter nature.'"

I venture to say that ladies are seldom so indifferent to their own appearance as Miss Adelaide Proctor evidently was. I think it was at this same dinner that I met Mr. and Mrs. Ruskin, very shortly after their marriage. Edwin Landseer sat next to me, and he was startled, or appeared so, by a question from Mr. Ruskin, directed to him in a loud voice from the other end of the table.

"Mr. Landseer," said the great writer, "can you tell me in what the wisdom of the serpent consists? 'Be ye wise as serpents,' says Scripture. Pray tell us how he shows his wisdom."

"I really don't know," said the painter, "unless it is in the stealthy way in which he approaches his prey."

Not a very satisfactory explanation, it seems to

me ; perhaps some one who reads these lines may be able to give a better one.

It is told of Stothard, R.A., that he was scarcely ever seen without sketch-book in hand ; it is further asserted that no true artist is ever without the means of jotting down his impressions at all times and under all circumstances. E. W. Cooke, R.A., was a notable instance of this ; wherever he was, there was his sketch-book also. He kept a party of us waiting for dinner at Greenwich while he sketched some boats from the balcony of the hotel.

Creswick, though by nature a lazy fellow, was a pretty constant sketcher, and no wonder that the scenery on part of the Rhine tempted him out of his usual indolence. He was busy at work on one of the Rhine steamers making rapid studies of bits of scenery as the vessel made its way, when one of the passengers came and looked over him. The gentleman rejoined some lady friends on the other side of the boat, Creswick, for some reason, immediately following, when he overheard this remark : " There is a man drawing on the other side of the steamer who has no more notion of drawing than a baby."

Creswick returned to his sketching, and, on looking up, discovered his critic again scrutinizing his work. The gentleman said :

" A delightful art, yours, sir ; it must be very pleasant to have your gift of making such charming sketches."

" How can you say that ?" said the artist. " Why,

I heard you just now tell some ladies that I had no more idea of drawing than a baby!"

I hope Lady Butler will forgive me for adding an anecdote to the above, in which she figures under the name she made famous—Miss Thompson. A model who had been much employed by her, and who had made himself useful in procuring material for her war pictures, was requested to obtain permission for the lady to make a study of a dead horse. I believe there are places in London called "knackers' yards," where dead horses are to be found in process of demolition before their remains become the food of hounds, and their skins, etc., used for other purposes.

"Go," said Miss Thompson, "to the knacker's," giving an address; "mention my name, and I think you will have no difficulty in getting me permission to make a sketch of a horse before they begin to operate upon him."

The knacker's yard was easily found, together with an overseer or foreman who was very civil. The model explained his errand.

"It's for Miss Thompson, the celebrated artist. You must know her name?"

"Can't say as I do," said the man. "I know Miss Burdett Coutts!"

I may supplement this by an adventure of my own in search of material. The last picture in the series of the "Road to Ruin," painted by me some years ago, represents my hero preparing for suicide in a squalid garret. I sought high and low for the

miserable furniture common to such places. For some time—though I risked robbery and infectious disorders in going into likely places—I could not find the kind of table that I wanted; they were all too new or too good, or they were not of the shape that I desired. At last in a small public-house, where I drank some beer that I did not want, I found a man who, on my explaining my difficulty, said:

"I live within two doors of this, and I think I've got the very thing you want upstairs. Come on, and I'll show it to you."

My friend was the owner of a very small and dirty print-shop hard by the public. In the window was an engraving after a picture of my own, out of which I proceeded to make capital.

"That is an engraving from a picture of mine," said I.

"Nonsense," said the man. "You don't mean to say you are Frith?"

"No other," said I.

"Well, that is a good 'un. Come along upstairs. If the table suits, we'll soon make a bargain over it."

The table did suit; it was the very thing I had so long been in search of—very worn, very rickety; money value *nil* for any purpose but my own.

"Now," said I, "what shall I give you for it?"

"Wait a bit," said my friend.

The man went to the top of the stairs and shouted, "Harriet!"

"What's to do?" said a voice from below.

"Is Polly downstairs?"

"No, she ain't; she's gone to Mrs. Grime's for my stays, and she has somewhere else to go after."

"Ah, that's a pity!" remarked the man, turning to me. "I wish you could ha' seen her; she is a downright pretty girl, though I say it as ought not. *You* could do Polly justice, you could. Bless you, I know all your pictures—the 'Derby Day' and that—and if you will do me a likeness of my daughter, I will give you that table for it with pleasure."

The price demanded seemed to me extravagant; and, after a little explanation, I acquired the table for half-a-crown.

CHAPTER VI.

AN OVER-TRUE TALE.

We have innumerable instances of predilections for certain pursuits, prompted by what is called genius, so forcibly asserting themselves as to cause their possessors to throw away satisfactory chances of success in life in favour of others, in which success is problematical in the extreme. In tracing the career of an actor to its source, we may find him to have begun as a lawyer's clerk. An author rushes into print when he finds he can bear his position in the Post-Office no longer. A clerk, rejoicing in hard work and scanty pay in a merchant's office, casts his longing eyes at St. Paul's, and feels that, if he had the opportunity, he could do something like it, only much better.

In my youth, I sat under a gentleman every Sunday who took orders for shares—and was, in fact, a member of the Stock Exchange—before he took holy orders. It was said that he had been so horrified at what he called "the gambling on the Stock Exchange," that he only practised that business until he acquired a large fortune by it, and was

thus enabled to go to college and prepare himself for the Church. He preached, extemporaneously, sermons always an hour long, causing me—and probably others of his congregation—to put up silent prayers that he would come to an end, and let us go to our early dinners.

Statesmen have had humble beginnings, notably Mr. Disraeli's, which began in a merchant's office. One can imagine how that illustrious boy devoured the newspapers, and longed, with the eagerness of genius, "the applause of listening senates to command."

Without more knowledge of a sea-life than that acquired by reading Marryat's delightful novels, or from studying the lives of naval heroes, has many a boy run away from the state of life chalked out for him by his parents, only to find himself embarked—in a double sense—in a career about as unlike what he expected it to have been, as one thing can be from another.

In my own profession, of which I speak with experience, I have known instance after instance of youths who, prompted by irresistible impulse to become artists, have deliberately thrown away opportunities which wiser heads than theirs had provided for them ; and in spite of unceasing industry prompted by real love for the pursuit they have chosen, have found, when too late, that they have made the fatal error of mistaking the earnest desire to succeed—in a profession for which peculiar natural gifts are required—for the powers without which all the teaching and

hard work in the world are of no avail. And how piteous are their attempts! And how profound their astonishment when they find them refused admission to any of the exhibitions! Though the sad story I am about to tell has no relation to the foregoing—beyond the fact that the hero of it was one who had been led away by what he supposed was light from heaven—I have thought it well to preface it by remarks which cannot be too gravely laid to heart by young men, who are so prone to mistake inclination for power.

Charles Dysart was the only son of persons who had been sufficiently successful in trade as to enable them to article their son to a solicitor. The lawyer's son was a sculptor of ability, and became a great friend of Dysart. Of course, many of the friends of the sculptor were artists, and into their society Dysart was frequently thrown. The dry details of the law had no charm for the embryo-lawyer; but the somewhat Bohemian life to which he was introduced completely won his heart, and, what was worse, created in him a burning desire to be an artist. In due time the determination to study art was announced to his parents—vehemently opposed but eventually consented to—and Dysart became the pupil of an eminent sculptor whose studio was located near Hyde Park.

Dysart lived with his parents in Bayswater, and how joyously he wended his way through Kensington Gardens, and across the park—full of life and hope—to his master's studio may be imagined. Poor

fellow! I have heard him speak of his delight in a sunny spring morning's walk, of the soothing effect of the trees and the birds, and of his bright hopes of success unsullied by a doubt of their ultimate realization.

Dysart's master had impressed upon him the necessity for punctuality in his attendance, and the pupil prided himself on putting in an appearance at the studio as the clock struck ten. The consequence of this punctuality was, that a particular spot in Kensington Gardens was always passed at the same moment; and it would appear that someone else was under a similar stress of punctuality, for a young lady—with what seemed a roll of music in her hand—always arrived at this particular spot at the same time as Dysart, but coming from an opposite direction.

All artists are susceptible to female charms, and our young sculptor was no exception to the rule.

The young lady was tall, handsome, and neatly though not richly dressed, evidently a governess or music-teacher going to an early appointment. For the first few mornings the pedestrians passed each other as people do ordinarily in the street—the lady's eyes cast modestly down, the gentleman stealing a sidelong glance, which served but to confirm his conviction of the correctness of his first impression of the lady's charms. After awhile, the oddity of the situation seemed to strike both at the same time, for Dysart could not repress a faint smile, a reflection of which he saw—or thought he saw—in the lady's

face, as they passed each other at the precise moment, and under the same conditions, as they had done so many mornings in succession.

"Surely," thought Dysart, "there will be no harm in just saying 'Good-morning' as we pass; anyway, I will try it; she is a sweet, modest, charming creature, and cannot be offended."

Try it he did, and successfully, for his "Good-morning" produced a blush and another "Good-morning" from the music-teacher. The ice once broken, the "good-morning" led, at first, to short remarks upon the weather, till, on one special morning, rain, which had been threatening, put its threats into effect just at the moment our pedestrians were about to meet. Dysart had an umbrella; the lady had none. Here was an opportunity!

"Oh, pray let me offer you my umbrella."

"No, thank you; I shall be through the gardens in a few minutes, and I can then take a cab."

"Then you must permit me to see you to a cab; I really cannot allow you to get wet—pray permit me;" and, without waiting for permission, the lady was sheltered, and the necessity for punctuality at the studio ignored.

"I am really ashamed to trouble you—a perfect stranger. I ought not. It is really very kind of you," said the lady.

"Not at all. I am only too delighted. If there is no cab, I hope you will allow me to—have you far to go, may I ask?"

"Yes—no—not far. I could not think of allowing —I mean, of troubling you."

"Confound it, there *is* a cab," said Dysart to himself. A cab there was, and the music-teacher was deposited in it. "Where shall I tell the man to drive to?"

"Oh, please tell him to go down the Bayswater Road. I will direct him."

A low and soft voice, says Shakespeare, is an excellent thing in woman. This charm, with so many others, was possessed by the *incognita;* and deeper and deeper did our susceptible artist fall in love, and more and more unpunctual did he become at the studio. They always stop and shake hands now; he walks a little way back with her, or she with him. He is an artist—a sculptor. Oh, how she envies him! She loves pictures, though she is ignorant of their beauties; and he will be a great sculptor, and do busts and statues like the great Duke on the top of the arch! No, he hopes not, as he explains to her some of the faults of that famous work. He will be a Chantrey, a Woolner, or a Boehm. And now that he has told her his history, what is hers?

"I will be as frank with you as you have been with me," said she. "I am a very poor girl, and my parents are even poorer. I teach music, and thus make enough to keep myself, and sometimes assist those who so much require help. My dear father, with great sacrifice, gave me enough musical education—he was better off then than he is now—

to enable me to teach the rudiments; but I feel my future to be very dark."

"Oh! don't say that," said the lover, for lover he was by this time. "You will find someone whose happiness it will be to make your future bright and joyous."

"Ah! no," said the lady, with a sigh.

I am told there is such a thing as love at first sight, and that there have been innumerable instances of an incredibly short time being allowed to pass before that rapid growth was confirmed by marriage. I believe Dr. Johnson said that if the names of marriageable persons were put into a bag, shaken up together, drawn out and paired at random, the chances of happiness would be quite equal to those obtained by the ordinary proceeding. The Doctor was a wise man, though he married a widow; and he may have been right. But I, for one, should not like to try the experiment. That people always act hypocritically towards each other before marriage goes without saying—the woman hides her ill-temper, the man his selfishness. But those and other shortcomings are more likely to be discovered during a lengthened courtship than in the few days that sometimes elapse between declaration and wedlock.

Some weeks had passed away, when, on a certain delightful summer morning, two young people might have been seen sitting in close converse on one of the seats in Hyde Park. The young lady has been already sketched, the only change desirable to notice

being in the matter of dress, which had greatly improved. Of the gentleman's appearance, it is only necessary to say that it would have denoted to the passer-by the ordinary figure of a well-to-do young fellow, with an open, handsome, and manly face.

"You have no idea," he was saying, "how melancholy my walks have been since you went away! Each morning as I passed the spot where we first met—as I looked in vain for your dear figure—I used the most shocking language about your aunt for detaining you at Portsmouth. That pretty dress which becomes you so well, you may tell her from me, is a poor compensation for keeping the wearer from one to whom she is dearer than his own life. Oh, Clara!—I may call you Clara now, may I not?—let me hear from your own dear lips that my love is returned."

"It is—it is!" said the lady, as she placed her hand in his.

"Now," said the swain, "let us talk about our future. You say you do not think your father will consent to our marriage, because my position in the world is so much above yours; and that unless my parents' consent can be obtained, he will strongly oppose us? Let me see him. I shall be able to show that, even if I do not succeed in my profession (a matter unworthy of consideration, because I *will* succeed), I shall always be independent; for my father is rich, and I am his only child. The dear old boy would be angry at first; he hates early marriages. He often says he had to wait seven

years for my mother (and when she puts him out, he wishes he had waited till now). But he is really a good old fellow, and I and the mother can do what we like with him; so my people don't count. Let me see your governor. He is a fishmonger in a small way. Well, I don't care what he is. I want his consent, because you say you won't marry me without it; so please arrange for me to see him as soon as possible."

A day was fixed for Mr. Charles Dysart to take tea with Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins at their house in Blank Street, Waterloo Road. I have been told that amongst the many transformations effected by the passion of love, it is quite usual to find the commonest objects in any way connected with the person loved to possess a kind of glamour unappreciable by the ordinary observer. Under these conditions, the inevitable aroma of Mr. Jenkins' shop may have been as pleasant to Mr. Dysart as attar of roses; and the squab, vulgar figure of the fishmonger may have been equally sublimated.

"This is Mr. Dysart, papa," said Clara, with a faint blush.

"Ho! 'ow do you do, sir—'ow do you do? Walk in, sir. You will find Mrs. J. in the parlour there; I will jine you presently. Here, Clara, take these s'rimps to your mother; she likes 'em with her tea."

Mr. Jenkins was, what he at once declared himself to be, "a man of business as went right to the p'int at once—no 'umbug about 'im."

"Here we are, sir, just as you see us, not quite the company for a gent like you; but that's your business. I have 'eard all about you from my daughter. She's a good girl, is Clara, and deserves a good husband. Now, then, what are you a-crying at? You're not thinking of that fellah as behaved so bad, are you? He's dead, ain't he?"

"Oh, papa!" said Clara, in an angry tone; "how can you——"

"'Ow can I? Why, you have surely told this gent all about——"

"No, Mr. Jenkins," said the lover; "Clara has told me nothing about a prior attachment, if that is what you mean; and you must allow me to say I do not wish to hear about anything that will distress her, and what it is unnecessary for me to know, for I am sure no blame can attach to her."

"Right you are," said Mr. Jenkins. "Now, then, about your pa and ma—will they agree to this 'ere union?"

"I wish them to know nothing about it at present. I am of age, and can do as I please. My father is rich——"

"Ah! so Clara says," interrupted the fishmonger.

"And he will provide for us until I can make money by my profession."

"Well, the missis and me will just go upstairs and talk it over," said Mr. Jenkins.

"Now, dearest Clara," said the enraptured Charles, "I feel sure your father will not oppose us; but if he should, let us make all objections useless by

being married at once. My mother thinks I don't look very well; and she has said more than once that a week at the seaside would do me good. I will take her at her word. Will next week do, or the week after? Think of the delight of a week always together at a quiet seaside place—Littlehampton, or Bognor, or somewhere! How happy we should be!"

"Oh, Charles—dear Charles!" was all that Clara had time to say before her august parents returned, when Mrs. Jenkins spake and said:

"Well, your pa and me consents; but we don't think we ought to. And we hope all's for the best. You see, mister, Clara is a deal away from home; and, of course, we can't have a eye upon her. Not as she wants it; for, thank the goodness! all my children is verchus. Still, the world is full of snares and pitfalls—quite unfit for a good-looking young girl; and it will be a real comfort for us to feel as she is fixed."

These eloquent words carried comfort to the heart of the enamoured Charles, who, within a month of their utterance, became the husband of his beloved Clara.

My reader can picture for himself, if he likes to take the trouble, the figure of Mr. Jenkins in his Sunday clothes, to which a huge wedding-favour was attached. He may see in his mind's eye the tall, spare form of Mrs. J., her handkerchief rolled up into the shape of a ball, with which she first dabbed one weeping eye, and then the other; and

with the same mind's eye he may see the blushing Clara, who vows all the vows usual on such occasions, little dreaming of the adverse fate that was so soon to prevent the possibility of their fulfilment.

Bognor is a dull place even at the most fashionable time of the year—dull to me, I mean. To our newly-married, what place on earth could be dull! How intense that brief happiness was to the husband, and how fearful the misery after, none know better than the present writer.

"Now, darling wife," said the enraptured bridegroom, "I will order dinner; and while it is preparing, let us join those swells upon the parade."

The throng was not great, and evidently mainly composed of the upper ten. Our happy couple joined the rest. A band was playing, to the strains of which people wandered slowly backwards and forwards in seaside fashion.

"By Jove! there's—no, it isn't—yes, it is! You see those two gentlemen coming, Clara? The one on the right is the sculptor, son of the lawyer I was articled to. That handsome chap on the right! Good heavens! what's the matter? You are ill—you are faint! What is it?"

At that moment the two men passed the married pair without a sign of recognition.

"Well, that's cool!" said Dysart. "What does the fellow mean by that? When he returns, I will know why he cut me like that."

"Oh, don't, Charles—don't! Never mind him. I don't feel well."

"I will take you to the hotel directly; but for the moment sit down there"—pointing to a seat. "I must go and ask that fellow what he meant. He saw me, I feel certain."

Scarcely hearing the words, "Pray don't go—oh, stop with me," the bridegroom overtook the sculptor and his friend.

"I say, look here. Why did you cut me just now?"

"Why, Charley? Why? Because I didn't approve of the company in which I found you."

"The devil! The company—the lady, do you mean?"

"Yes, dear Charley—the lady."

"And pray what do you object to in the lady, and what do you know about her?"

"I object to very much in the lady, and I know a great deal about her," was the reply, slowly uttered.

"I insist on an explanation. Where have you met her? what do you know about her? I doubt if you know her name."

"Yes, I do. Her name is Dickenson—christian name Clara, and she sat—no, stood—for the figure of Venus in the marble group I exhibited last year; and for you to be seen walking about with her in this public way isn't quite the thing, Charley. If your governor knew it there would be a fine row."

"I knew you were mistaken," said Dysart, in tones of intense relief; "the lady's name is not Dickenson, and it was Jenkins, so——"

"Well, I know it was Jenkins till she married that poor unfortunate devil Dickenson, and then she became Mrs. D., of course. I've heard that since the row she has gone back to her maiden name and her ordinary little game."

"The row—what row? for pity's sake explain. She is my wife. We were married this morning."

The sculptor dropped his friend's arm, and, placing his hands on Dysart's shoulders, he looked into the young man's face, and said:

"Never, Charley; don't tell me that."

"But I *do* tell you. We are man and wife."

"And married this morning," said the sculptor. "Well, of all the bold and abandoned profligates that—why, Charley, the woman can't marry you, for she is married already. Dickenson is living. I spoke to him yesterday. Wait. I will go and speak to her," said the sculptor. "Charley, you must place yourself in my hands. No communication must take place between you and that woman, who shall be proved to you to be one of the most infamous of her sex. Don't see her—don't speak to her. Go back to London by the first train, and leave the rest to me."

I think I may leave the rest of this "over-true tale" to my reader's imagination, noting only a few facts connected with it. Dysart never saw the woman he believed to be his wife again. After a reckless life, she died while still young.

Hearts do not break they say—"a broken heart" is but a figure of speech. We all have hearts of one

kind or other—some hard, some soft, some tender, others tough. In certain people the heart seems to have disappeared altogether, leaving a stone or something equally unimpressionable in the place of it. It would have been better for Charles Dysart if he had not lost his heart so completely to the miserable creature to whom it had been so trustingly given, for he would have been saved from an illness which put his life in danger. In time his fever left him—and time, the great physician, in its due course, healed a wound which had bid fair to embitter his whole life. Dysart gave up sculpture, or, to put it more correctly, sculpture gave him up. On the death of his parents he inherited a fair competence; he is a member of one of the oldest clubs in London, where he may be seen playing whist most afternoons. He plays a good game, I am told; and if he were to trump his partner's trick, he would astonish that occasionally irritable individual less than if he were to narrate his youthful escapade, so incredible would such a tale be from the lips of the staid old bachelor of to-day.

CHAPTER VII.

SCRAPS.

The heading of this chapter explains its character. It is intended to be desultory, disjointed, unconnected—scrappy, in fact, and possibly amusing. Let me begin with an anecdote in which the "Derby Day" figures, which is "true in substance and in fact," as, indeed, is everything else—I beg my reader to believe—that is noted here. In the second picture of the series painted by me, called the "Race for Wealth," which represents the drawing-room of the swindler, and called the "Spider at Home"—the occasion being the assembly of guests before the dinner—a gentleman in the right-hand corner of the composition is talking to two ladies who are seated on an ottoman. This is a portrait of Colonel Townshend Wilson, a distinguished Crimean officer and a very dear friend of mine—now, alas! gone to join the majority. Colonel Wilson also appears in the fourth picture, again in the right-hand corner, talking to a lady who, like himself, had come to the Old Bailey to witness the demeanour of the Spider as he stands in the dock. I run the risk of being

thought conceited when I say that the "Derby Day," now in the National Gallery, is always an object of attraction to the multitude—of course the ignorant multitude—who seem to prefer it to the Ansidei seventy-thousand-pound Raffaelle.

On one such occasion Colonel Wilson joined the sightseers and listened to their remarks, which, he told me, were mostly of the usual commonplace character, and not worth repeating; but amongst the spectators was a respectably dressed woman, who seemed greatly interested in the picture, and, after minutely examining it, she turned to Wilson, and said:

"I beg your pardon, sir, can you tell me if all this is *hand-painted?*"

When the "Derby Day" was at South Kensington, where it had been deposited in an out-of-the-way room pending its removal to the National Gallery, I heard some observations which interested me. I was examining the picture, as I often do, to see if a change of any kind had taken place in the purity and brightness of the colours, or if, what is more dreadful, any cracking had appeared, when two men, evidently of the labouring class, came upon the scene.

"This must be it," said one to the other; "it's a little 'un is this to make a fuss about. Why, there's no horses. Let's see—what do they call him as did it? Ah, I see—Frith. What's he mean by calling it the 'Derby Day'? It ain't a bit of it; it's nothing but the people as goes."

Both men examined the picture for some moments, when the speaker said :

"Them dresses was wore a long while ago, I know. Him as did it is dead, in course ?"

"I dunno," replied his friend. "That there lobster's well done !"

The authorities at South Kensington have hit upon a way of reminding living artists, whose works have the honour of places in the Sheepshanks and other collections, that if their pictures are destined to live, the painters of them are sooner or later bound to "share the common lot." Painted in black letters on the gold frame in which his picture is enshrined, the artist may read the title of it, with a *memento mori* addition ; in my own case, for example, thus : "Mr. Honeywood introducing the bailiffs to Miss Richland as his friends. W. P. Frith, R.A., born 1819, d. ——."

I submit that this little "d. ——" is as ingenious a contrivance to remind us we are mortal, as was the human skull at the feasts of the classic potentate.

In my previous volumes, in speaking of the brothers Landseer, I have mentioned only Charles and Edwin. With an apology to the anonymous correspondent who reminds me of Thomas Landseer, the eldest brother, and admirable engraver of Edwin's works, I venture to pay my small tribute to that gentleman's merits. Without being able to agree with my correspondent that, failing his brother's admirable translations in black and white, Edwin's name and fame would not stand in "anything like the position

it does," I confess that the delightful art of Thomas, so thoroughly in sympathy with his great brother, and so perfectly expressed in such works as "The Drive," "The Random Shot," "The Monarch of the Glen," "The Stag at Bay," and many others, places the producer in the front rank of the company of translators, and greatly enhances his brother's fame. These engravings are examples of two minds working in harmony together, and they bear the vivid impress of both.

In photogravure, so popular now, the place of the second mind is supplied by a machine, which often does its best to destroy or mutilate the efforts of the first; but sometimes, I admit, reproduces the effect of a picture with extraordinary accuracy. But accuracy, in my opinion, is not enough; I want at the same time the taste and skill, which amount almost to genius, with which the great engraver changes into black and white the colours of the picture before him. I maintain that though a photogravure from a picture by Rembrandt, done in the machine's best style, would be a very satisfactory possession, an etching from the work by the master himself would be a far more precious treasure.

In the print of the "Rent Day," by Raimbach, after Wilkie, the engraver has entered so completely into the spirit and meaning of the painter, as not only to render the character and expression of each face and figure perfectly, but also to "carry further" (as we painters say) the *chiaroscuro* of the whole. A comparison of a proof of the "Rent Day" with

the original picture will prove this to those who have eyes to see.

In the engraving from my own picture of Claude Duval, by my old friend Stocks, R.A.—of whom it is not too much to say that he is one of the best engravers in this or any other country—my friend has added a charm to the composition, by his exquisite rendering of every part of it, that I fail to find in the original picture.

Here, again, the general effect is much improved.

I will close these remarks with a farewell blessing to photogravure, and a fervent hope that a fickle public will speedily tire of it, as it always does of better things.

Thomas Landseer, known to his familiars as "dear old Tom," was a genial soul, always bubbling over with smiles and good-humour; and though for many years before his death he became "stone-deaf," he was entirely free from one of the common failings of the deaf—that of an irritable suspicion of what is passing around them. He could hear nothing; but he sat and smiled in lifelong silence, quite regardless of what might be said of him or his doings.

Many years ago, Tom Landseer, perfectly deaf, and another friend, quite blind, were in the habit of visiting at my house. A little boy, one of my sons, of a nature which deserved more correction than it received, was in the habit of taking advantage of our friends' infirmities (if he could do it unobserved) by shouting some nonsense or other into the ear of

the deaf man, and making the ugliest face he could produce at the blind. This practice afforded the child such amusement that nothing that was said or done to him prevented his indulging in it, until one day he made a mistake, by shouting at the blind, and making his grimace at the deaf. I never knew whether the victims understood the situations. Tom Landseer smiled a little more than usual, and our blind friend started as if he were shot. The young gentleman's mistake, and another whipping, completely put an end to his naughty behaviour.

When I first made Thomas Landseer's acquaintance, I could make him hear me by speaking pretty loudly into the trumpet which he always carried. He had been very fond of music; and it is said that, being at an evening-party, and observing that much clapping of hands had taken place at the conclusion of a song by one of the guests, Tom went to the piano, and said to the performer, "Judging by the way it was received, that must have been a delightful song of yours—would you mind singing a verse or two into my trumpet?" at the same time placing the instrument in his ear, and presenting the broad end of it to the singer.

I am not aware whether all perfectly deaf people lose control over their voices to the extent of not knowing whether they are talking loudly or the reverse in common conversation, but Tom Landseer certainly never knew whether he was whispering or shouting; and he has been known to convey

what he intended to be a dead secret in a voice loud enough to rouse the neighbourhood.

I remember meeting him at a private view, which, like all such ceremonies, was uncomfortably crowded; and as I entered the room, he caught sight of me, and exclaimed in a voice loud enough for every soul to hear, "You are looking in excellent health; it is a matter for national congratulation to see you looking so well."

There was an opportunity for a student of expression, when astonished people looked round to see who the extraordinary person could be whose bodily condition was a matter of national importance!

I think I can speak of the last sounds that Tom Landseer heard in this world. If I am not mistaken, the *Warrior* was the first iron-plated ship made in this country; but, whether or not, it was a vessel whose engines were manufactured by John Penn; and, in response to that gentleman's invitation, a party of us, of which Tom Landseer was one, found ourselves on board the *Warrior*. We inspected the engines, and made foolish remarks about them —at least, I did; and we watched the fixing of one of the armour-plates at the vessel's side. Tom Landseer's trumpet had long been discarded as useless, communication by writing only being possible. The noise of the hammering may be imagined—it was terrific. I wrote in the little book he carried, "Can you hear anything?" Tom smiled, and wrote, "I can hear a distant tapping."

Charles Landseer, as I have said elsewhere, was

a confirmed and sometimes successful punster. Edwin never attempted wit in any form in my hearing; but Jacob Bell told me that when he and Edwin were travelling together in Belgium, on his remonstrating with the painter for not writing to his brother as he had promised, Edwin said, "What's the use? He is too deaf to hear from us."

Another incident connected with E. L. occurs to me.

I received a note from him, in which he asked me to come and see a "little work" of his. I presented myself at his house in St. John's Wood Road. Landseer met me, holding a large silk handkerchief, with which he bound my eyes in the way one reads of a messenger to a hostile camp being blindfolded. He then led me along the passage, and into his studio, when the bandage was removed, and I found myself in front of a small piece of sculpture—a copy of the "Stag at Bay," the animals coloured in imitation of nature. I felt and expressed surprise.

"Is that your work?" said I.

"Yes," he replied; "how do you like it?"

Now, I did not like it at all; it appeared to me like an ornament for the top of a clock, with an effect altogether vulgar and tawdry. The piece of sculpture was exhibited afterwards; but its reception was not favourable enough to induce the artist to repeat the experiment.

That Landseer was a good—and might have been a great—sculptor, the lions in Trafalgar Square sufficiently prove. I saw him at work upon them. A

cat was in the room; he pointed to it, and said, "That is my model."

An amusing illustration of the lesson of punctuality at the dinner-hour, which Landseer learnt in Pembridge Villas, took place at an entertainment to which he was invited, and where I also was present. A little Hungarian painter, named Brocky, was a guest, and a very late one; for we had waited for him so long, that our host had just proposed we should go to dinner, when Brocky appeared. His English was much broken; and, as he entered the room, he, no doubt, intended to say, "Better late than never." But he made an important change in the proverb; for he said, with his usual flippancy:

"Better never than late."

"I quite agree with you," said Landseer.

Neither Charles nor Edwin Landseer ever married. Thomas was married, and had one son, a promising young man, who died early.

The sole representative of this remarkable family now living is the lady who is "immortalized for ever," as Sass used to say, in the picture of "Bolton Abbey in the Olden Time"—Landseer's sister, now Mrs. Mackenzie, who stood for the figure of the girl carrying a tray of fish as one of the offerings to the monks (I hope she will not be angry with me *à la* Ouida), and who still retains so much of the beauty of the girl in the picture as to make her easily recognisable as its original.

CHAPTER VIII.

A YORKSHIRE BLUNDER, AND SCRAPS CONTINUED.

I COMMENCED the last chapter by telling my reader that it would be disjointed and unconnected, and I now proceed to show that a similar announcement applies equally well to what follows.

Very nearly half a century ago, a beautiful Prince, quite as handsome as any hero of a fairy tale, came from a foreign country to woo and win the love of the great Queen of England. Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha was beyond question, not only mentally, but physically also, one of the most remarkable men of his own or any other time. To the most fascinating outward appearance, the Prince added the most gracious and courtly manner that could be imagined. What wonder, then, that he proved irresistible even to a Queen?

I think—but am not sure—that in 1839 the railway to Windsor was not open; but I am quite sure I was there one Sunday afternoon in that year when I saw the royal party, including the Queen and Prince Albert, walking about on one of the terraces at Windsor Castle. Readers of Madame D'Arblay

may remember that writer's description of George III. and Queen Charlotte similarly occupied, the difference consisting in the royal couple mixing freely with their subjects on the terrace; whereas, in Queen Victoria's day, the public is kept at a respectful distance, and the royal family promenade alone, or only with their immediate attendants. The necessity for this difference is palpable in the greatly increased number of those who now wish to feast their eyes on royalty. Even in the early time I speak of, unless one could secure a prominent place, a scrutiny of the promenaders became very difficult.

It was a knowledge of this difficulty that caused a young man from a distant part of the country—who had never seen the Queen, and had vowed to his friends, and to himself, that he would not return home till he had achieved that object—to address himself to a man, a royal footman evidently by his dress, who was crossing the courtyard which led to the gates through which all must pass to gain access to the terraces. Though the moment had not arrived for the admission of the public, my young friend, being a Yorkshireman, was determined to take time by the forelock.

"I say, John, Robert, whatever they call you—look here, I coom from the country."

"So I hear, sir," said the footman.

"Well, that's nout. I've never seen t' Queen, and I want to get a good sight of her. Now, can't you just let me through them gates, just afore t' rest o' t' folks? I want to get a good plaace, ye see."

"Well, sir," said the man, "I don't know whether I dare. I might lose *my place*, you see."

"Nay, mun, thou'll nivver lose thy plaace for such a thing as that. Thou can say to t' Queen that she hasn't gotten a more layaller subject than John Stokes, not in all Yorkshire! I nobbut want to go in just afore t' rest on 'em."

The footman looked at his watch. Ten minutes ought still to elapse before the appointed time for opening the gates.

"Well, sir," said the man, "as you seem so very desirous of seeing her Majesty——"

"Aye," interrupted the Yorkshireman, "and t' young chap, too, ye know—him as is coorting, you know."

"Yes, sir, and the Prince also, I will run the risk —ah, I see there are three or four loyal people at the gate already."

"Aye, and there'll be a lot more if thou isn't quick. Look there—there's a lot more coomin' up."

"Well, come along, then," said the man.

The gate was opened, and the eager Yorkshireman was about to rush through, when an idea seemed to strike him. He put his hand into his pocket and produced half a crown, which he offered to the footman.

"No, thank you, sir," said the man; "we are forbidden to take fees."

"Take it, mun, take it—nobody 'll know."

"No, thank you, sir."

The Yorkshireman secured a foremost place, and

held it firmly till the royal party appeared. There was the Queen, sure enough, and by her side the Prince, and on the other side, close to her Majesty, conversing with apparent familiarity, was the footman!

"By Gosh!" exclaimed the Yorkshireman to a bystander, "whoever saw the likes of that? If I was to say when I go home that I saw the Queen hob-a-nobbing with a footman, nobody would believe me."

"I should think nobody would," was the reply. "What on earth do you mean?"

"What do I mean? Just look there. Why, he's a-laughing and talking to the Queen like anything."

"Who?"

"Who? why, that's the chap that opened me the gate—the footman—him with the blue coat and red collar!"

When the bystander's laughter would allow him to speak, he said:

"Blue coat and red collar! why, that's the Windsor uniform, and your footman is Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister."

The hero of this story, whom I have disguised as a vulgar Yorkshireman, is still a living gentleman, or was the other day, for I saw him at the Royal Academy; and he would vouch for the truth of this little experience, the particulars of which I had from his own lips some years ago. I had no acquaintance with Lord Melbourne, but I have been told by a

person who knew him well that he was one who would have thoroughly enjoyed being mistaken for a footman.

Here follows a mistake—or, rather, two mistakes—of a different kind. Somebody has said, "There is human nature and French nature." Without venturing to divide my fellow-creatures so arbitrarily, I think I may aver that, in one respect, Frenchmen and Englishmen differ completely. When an Englishman speaks a little French, he is so sensitive to the mistakes he feels sure he will commit as to make him shy—to a fault—in attempting to carry on a conversation in that language; whereas nothing seems to delight a Frenchman, who speaks a little English, more than his own voluble chatter, in which the language is broken into unintelligible fragments.

Many years ago I met at Creswick's a French artist, who was a perfect example of this. If he were spoken to in French, he would always reply in English. He told us a great deal about French art and the practice in the schools, I believe; but, to use a vulgarism, I could make "neither head nor tail" of what he said. I asked him in French whether the modern exhibition in Paris—now called the Salon, then held over the old pictures in the Louvre—was a good one. (I won't attempt to imitate his pronunciation.)

"I do not know," he said; "I left before the aperture."

The aperture!—aperture, thought I—*ouverture*—

OPENING! A moment's reflection brought relief to my mind. We then fell to talking about French models.

"Yes, the English woman is prettier than the French; the English miss"—here he blew away imaginary kisses—"she is—she is—*mais*—but we have the model man as you have it not in your country; he is—he is—— There was a man Fleury, I think it was—his name was—ah! he was such fine man; he was a man of Herculaneum strength."

My reader will admit that a jump from the powerful model to the secretary of the Royal Academy is a proof that when I said I should be desultory I am as good as my word. I never had a picture rejected from the Royal Academy, but I am too well aware of the terrible, and, in some cases, ruinous consequences of rejection, not to feel the warmest sympathy with those who suffer from it. I have seen strong men cry like children, women look dazed, with minds momentarily paralyzed; and I have seen men so mad with rage that the lives of the Hanging Committee would have been in peril if the angry artists could have got at them.

The Royal Academy has now been in existence 120 years, and we have escaped any outbreak of actual violence, except upon one occasion.

A Welshman named Evans, a portrait-painter of merit, had been a pretty constant exhibitor for some years. He assisted Sir Thomas Lawrence, many of whose columns and background-curtains he is said to have painted. I have been told, but I

cannot vouch for the truth of it, that all Welshmen are choleric; anyway, Evans was, and when he found that not a single portrait by him was allowed to appear in the exhibition of (about) 1846, he armed himself with a thick stick and took his way to Trafalgar Square, where we were then located.

"Where," said the furious Welshman to the porter, "is your blanked Hanging Committee?"

"The Hanging Committee, sir?" said the affrighted porter; "the gentlemen—the members, sir, are all in the galleries varnishing the pictures, sir."

"Bring one or two of 'em down here," said Evans, as he stood in the hall grasping his cudgel; "fetch 'em, sir, fetch 'em! I should like the whole lot."

"Oh! it's against orders, sir, I couldn't do that; but here comes Mr. Knight the secretary; perhaps he will do for you?"

"Do for me?" muttered Evans, as he ground his teeth. "I'm more likely to do for him."

Knight approached:

"What is it?" said he. "What's the matter? Ah, good-morning, Mr. Evans."

"Good what! Good-morning—a precious good-morning this for me; but perhaps you've had nothing to do with this infamous—now, Mr. Secretary, I insist—I want to know all about this! I *will* see the Hanging Committee or some of 'em. They have turned out my portraits, and I want to—I *will* know why they did it!"

Evans was a big man; Knight was a little one, but with a courage beyond his size, for he said:

"I can give you every information, Mr. Evans; I was one of the Hanging Committee, and the reason your portraits were rejected exists in the pictures themselves; we did not give them places because we did not think them deserving of——"

Knight remembered nothing between the utterance of the above and his return to consciousness, when he found himself on the porter's bed, with a large lump upon his head, which one of the porters was tenderly bathing with a mixture effective in all cases of blows or bruises, while sympathetic R.A.'s stood around him. The assassin had disappeared, leaving a heavy cudgel — snapped in two — awful evidence of what the porter called his "wiolence."

How well I remember the whole affair! I was quietly working at my picture, when a member rushing past me, said: "Come along, Frith, come along! somebody has murdered the secretary!"—a startling announcement in the halls devoted to the arts of peace.

Poor Knight looked very rueful, and little consoled by our vows of vengeance—legal vengeance. We would have the wretch before a magistrate; he would get six months' imprisonment at least, without the option of a fine. Or, if the secretary preferred another method of punishment, we would get Baker, the model, who was a pugilist, to thrash Evans within an inch of his Welsh life; or an action should be brought, free of expense to the sufferer—an action for assault and battery: a verdict with a thousand pounds damages would be certain.

Eventually, much to my disappointment, a civil action was brought, with a result so inadequate in our estimation, that we were persuaded that the presiding judge's portrait had been amongst the rejected. One of the Council said he recollected the picture coming before him—he knew the face in a moment; it was a good likeness, though a bad picture, etc., etc. I don't think any of us believed our friend, we thought him mistaken; but there was no mistake about the value a British jury placed upon the head of a Royal Academician. For the sum of twenty pounds—or it might have been twenty-five—any evil-disposed person may indulge himself in breaking the head of anyone amongst the forty whenever he pleases; but, as I have no wish to deceive any rejected one inclined to revenge himself, I have to remind him that though twenty pounds was the price of the amusement forty years ago, it might be more expensive now; but I don't think the heads have risen in value, so the difference of cost is scarcely worth consideration.

I have said elsewhere that our former secretary, J. P. Knight, R.A., was somewhat of a wag; I may add that, without being conscious of it, he had also a manner that was, occasionally, a little provoking; and at such a time as that of his interview with Mr. Evans, it may have added somewhat to the irritation of the rejected one. This much in excuse for the assault.

I think an assault was in the air on another occasion. Mr. X. was undoubtedly one of the fore-

most and most eminent members of the Royal Academy; but Mr. X. considered himself to be the *crême de la crême*—the very head and front of the institution. Wherever Knight was, he played first fiddle, and it is but justice to say that he played it very well; but responsible positions, rightly or wrongly assumed, bring with them heavy responsibilities; and when Knight was on the Hanging Committee, he had to bear the brunt of attacks from members as well as outsiders—the weapon of the former being the tongue; of the latter, as we have seen, the stick.

"Knight," said Mr. X., "you were senior member of the Hanging Committee this year, were you not?"

"I was," said Knight.

"Well, then, what the devil do you mean by hanging my picture next to that blazing thing of Turner's, that takes all the colour out of it? You have taken good care to keep your own portraits surrounded by innocent things. Let me tell you, Knight, that I am not to be treated in this way, for I consider myself the 'figure-head' of this Academy."

"So you are," said Knight; 'the most useless part of the ship."

From the fire in Mr. X.'s eyes, and the clenching of his fists, I really think our secretary was very near receiving a lesson according to Evans once more.

From the beginning of the Academy, in 1768, till the resignation of Mr. Knight, the office of secretary

had always been filled by an Academician. The secretary had no vote, but he could speak as long as he pleased upon any subject in general assembly, and in this way probably influenced many votes. The position also gave opportunities for patronage and influence, which were liable to be abused. Then, again, the labours became so onerous, that it was pretty generally felt that they ought to occupy much more time than a man in the active practice of his profession could devote to them. By a resolution of the whole body a lay secretary was chosen, and we now rejoice in the possession of a most effective gentleman, whose performance of his duties affords great and general satisfaction. Like all prudent men, I have no doubt our Mr. Eaton has insured his life.

There is no fear for his life, I hope. I think there is a society, or company, to which I should like to draw his attention—that in which one can insure against accidental or other injury. Outsiders increase greatly in number, and there are some fiery exhibitors and would-be exhibitors amongst them.

I heard a lady say the other day that she should like to murder the secretary, because he had—at least she said he had—garbled the title of her picture in the catalogue, and omitted her quotation. It would be useless—or it might be too late—to tell that lady that if exhibitors were allowed to have their occasionally unreasonably lengthy quotations inserted in the catalogue, we should have to issue it in two volumes.

Many exhibitors are under the impression—absurdly false—that the secretary can influence the placing of their pictures in the exhibition. This gives rise to revengeful feelings; what has happened once, and nearly happened twice, might happen again; and it is my sense of the value of our present secretary, with limb and life intact, that induces me to press upon him the desirability of insuring, so far as he can, against the perils of his position.

CHAPTER IX.

RICHARD DADD.

With the conviction that I shall pain no one by the publication of the following letter, I may say a few words in explanation of it.

About the year 1840 or '41, alarming Chartist riots took place in Wales. The town of Newport was saved from disaster by the presence of mind and courage of Mr. Phillips, the Mayor, who was knighted for his conduct on the occasion. Sir Thomas Phillips was an intimate friend of David Roberts, R.A., whose advice was asked respecting a journey to the East projected by Sir Thomas. Roberts's knowledge of the Holy Land, acquired on a long visit, was somewhat extensive, sufficiently so to be of value; and as Sir Thomas Phillips intended to take a young artist with him to make sketches, the Academician was the very man most likely to name a "fit and proper person." Richard Dadd's father and Roberts were great friends, but it was not friendship that dictated the selection of the younger Dadd from amongst the rest of us, but the knowledge that the young artist's powers as a draughts-

man, and his amiable qualities as a man, would render him as charming in companionship as he would be efficient as an artist. I have never seen Sir Thomas Phillips, and therefore have no knowledge of the precise time when the terrible malady from which my poor friend suffered first showed itself, or whether it appeared at all during the Eastern travels; but I think there can be little doubt that the excitement of the scenes—as Dadd himself says in the lines which I have italicised in his letter—together with the heat, must have helped to develop the disease to which he was predisposed. How mysterious, how inscrutable are these afflictions!

My painting-room and Dadd's were next door to each other in Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square. It is not possible for two persons to be more intimate than we were. We saw each other every day. Dadd was my superior in all respects; he drew infinitely better than I did, and in my many pictorial difficulties a tap at my wall would bring my friend with ready suggestions to my relief.

I think the Eastern travel lasted longer than a year. Intelligence was brought to us by the elder Dadd from time to time, always satisfactory. Richard was bringing home "such sketches as will astonish you fellows!" He had often astonished us; notably by a series of designs from Tasso, which, probably to this day, decorate Lord Foley's house in, I think, Grosvenor Square. He had also gained medals at the Royal Academy; to say nothing of having exhibited

pictures which had attracted both attention and purchasers. His best were fairy subjects, fanciful and beautiful, but never extravagant. Dadd was, during my knowledge of him, a man of strong common-sense, the reverse of flighty or excitable in his conversation; and, in my judgment, the last man of my acquaintance likely to suffer from the affliction which destroyed him.

Never can I forget one fateful day when my brother artist, Egg, entered my studio, and, with a face pale as death, told me that Dadd had returned home—mad! I could not believe it possible. I said so. Egg sat down; the tears stood in his eyes.

"Yes," said he, "he is. His father says he must have had a sunstroke or something; I don't know—his father says he will be better soon; but certainly he is——"

Here Egg fairly broke down. He could give me no particulars, and shortly after went away.

I tried to work—failed—and was cleaning my palette, when a tap came at my door. I called out, "Come in!" and a voice replied, "And he came in." Dadd appeared, and shook hands with me just in his hearty old manner, his face beaming with delight at our meeting.

"Why, old fellow," said he, "you look pale" (I dare say I did); "you have been working too hard—that's bad. I shall send you to Jerusalem, or to some of those wonderful places that I've seen, my boy; they would put colour into your cheeks, and open your eyes too, I can tell you!"

"And how have you been?" said I, when I could speak. "I am so glad to see you back, and looking so well!"

"Oh, I'm all right. I felt a little seedy a day or two ago; but I'm all right now."

Where, in the name of heaven, thought I, is the insanity Egg talks of?

"Now then," added Dadd, "show us what you've been doing. What's that—'Dolly Varden'?" (I was painting the one now in the South Kensington Museum at the time.) "Oh, I know, where she leans laughing against the tree. You have done that from little Turner" (a well-known model), "I know. Very pretty—face a little dolly—ain't it? More like a doll than Dolly Varden! Couldn't resist the joke. Just give her a little more character!"

We then fell into tattle on general subjects, my friend inquiring after all the "clique," as we called ourselves, and never by word or sign showing any difference from his ordinary behaviour. The competition for the decoration of the Houses of Parliament was going on, and Dadd told me he intended to enter the lists, and was looking out for a room large enough to enable him to make his cartoon. This he afterwards executed, but in a hurried manner. The subject was "St. George and the Dragon," the only evidence of eccentricity being the inordinate length of the dragon's tail, which one of the papers said was as long as O'Connell's (O'Connell had an enormous Irish following, which was called his *tail* by the profane).

I parted from him on that day of his first visit to me, in the firm conviction that Egg was mistaken, and that Dadd was as sane as the rest of us.

No one will wonder at my vivid recollection of that dreadful time, or that I should note that he was much more buckishly dressed than usual. He seldom wore gloves: at his visit to me he wore white kid, upon which I joked him, and he said he had just received his "wages," and he thought he would make himself "a little fashionable." Can it be believed that the awful disease had full possession of him as he was talking to me then, and on the occasion of many visits to him afterwards, without there being evidence of the slightest sign of it?

Dadd soon began to work as usual, without showing a trace of insanity in his pictures. The last time I saw him was when I went to say "good-bye" previous to a trip abroad in the August of 1843; he was then painting a picture of a very prosaic scene—a group of Eastern people with camels, a view of Cairo in the background. The picture seemed to me spiritless and poor, rather the produce of a sluggish mind than of one "all o'erthrown."

My friend Egg accompanied me through the Belgian cities; then up the Rhine to Strasburg, and back to Paris, where I read in *Galignani* of the fearful murder my dear friend had committed. He had escaped, and had hidden his condition so skilfully as to pass everywhere for an ordinary passenger, till his disease again seized him with such fury as to

cause him to attack a traveller in a diligence, who, fortunately for himself, was strong enough to master his assailant. Dadd was sent to England, and carefully and kindly guarded till he died—as I have lately been told—two years ago. He amused himself by painting pictures, in which may be traced evidences of genius, and, alas! of insanity. I can truly say, from a thorough knowledge of Dadd's character, that a nobler being, and one more free from the common failings of humanity, never breathed.

"*Hecate* Man-of-War Steamer, lying off Jaffa,
"Nov. 26, 1842.

"My dear Frith,

"I have some moments to spare now, which, if you please, I'll devote to the cultivation of your mind. That's not a small amount of vanity which can dictate such a sentence; but, in truth, my dear Powell, I have seen so much of the world and what is in it lately, that I grow vain, very vain. This I do not regret, but the circumstance of my being able to *do* so little in the way of sketching is to me matter of great grievance. Like most people, I can forget and forgive my own errors and failings; but, like most others, I also must feel the loss of prime opportunities for improvement and emolument. We travel immensely fast, and by such long stages, that very little daylight is ever left to sketch that which presents itself even where there is most interest. The mode of journeying here is on the backs of horses or mules, and they are of a very sorry description,

having the habit of tripping and lying down in a remarkably developed state. I am now a decent horseman for these parts, and have acquired the art of riding, by dint of sundry falls and bruises, and one or two plunges into rivers and streams. It would puzzle you to recognise your old neighbour under the strange guise I have assumed. Ordinarily my dress has consisted of a cap of the country, called a fez, with two handkerchiefs, one white and one red, tied round it. I've beard *and* moustachios; a pair of large boots of Russian leather, which I can shake off and on, and which are worn outside the trousers, reaching halfway up the leg; and, added to this, a white blouse, which is generally stuffed full of little things for the convenience of travelling. But you will not derive much pleasure from this description of self, and I will not bore you any more with it.

"From the dating of this you are to understand that we are on the way to Alexandria, and expect to reach it in thirty hours from Jaffa. The officers on board are very civil and attentive, and I perceive the value of my companion's title, as it procures him the smiles of all. I'm very tired of the world, and have seen so much disgusting selfishness since I have left England that I am half a misanthrope. From Damascus to Jerusalem and Jaffa the journey has been of a very singular kind, as we have had to put up with all sorts of filth and inconvenience to see an infernally rocky country that won't grow anything but big stones. This is a stretch, but still the bareness of the country in some parts is very striking.

Where the soil is cultivated there are but few trees, and where these do occur they are not large. The presence of water is always indicated by the luxuriance of vegetation on its banks, and among them you may see the palm, plane, and prickly-pear trees; whilst the evergreens, such as the orange, lemon, etc., are as thick as bugs in a rug. Noble simile!

"Nothing can be more dirty than the houses of some of the people—indeed, of most of them; they are built of mud, and have no chimneys, the smoke finding a vent where it may, and half suffocating one before it escapes. They burn wood, the acrid quality of whose smoke is very bad for the eyes, and I frequently observed the people labouring under affections in that part. The house of a sheik, or chief of the village, will, of course, be the best in the place, and usually consists of some three or four rooms, in the largest of which—where councils, etc., are held—the traveller is received and takes up his quarters. This room is nearly square as possible, and the floor is raised about six inches from the ground, but is of mud; the lower part, about three or four feet wide, may be railed off, and here the servants, etc., stand, and gape their fill, watching every motion of the stranger with the greatest interest. The fireplace is not unfrequently in the middle of the room, or a little on one side, made of clay, and shaped like a horseshoe, the sides being about eight or ten inches high. Sometimes they will be double, thus: ω; and sometimes the fire will be in the corner of the

room, with something like a chimney-piece, shaped as those of iron in blacksmiths' shops. But, whatever the form, it is certain to be rude and primitive. In one corner of the room will lie, perhaps, a quantity of corn; in another will be the carpet, and the sheik himself, smoking his pipe with the most *astonishing* gravity and perseverance. If it is night when you arrive, the effects of light and shadow are something only to be painted, not described; for if I tell you that their dresses are picturesque and bright in colour—if I tell you that their faces are handsome and full of expression, that the old men look like patriarchs, that the young have almost feminine beauty, that the pipes are bubbling and the smoke wreathing about in fanciful curls, and on this the fire throwing a ruddy glare, you may indeed form a general notion, but you will certainly want the exquisite individuality of all around.

"It would sometimes arrive that the sheik would be very communicative, and that in his efforts to force his meaning on our dull faculties he would use the most impassioned gestures; then the examination of our arms would yield him the most unfeigned pleasure, the which would exhibit itself in the most childlike simplicity. Then would he compare his own with the weapons of our party, and from this would arise great fun and amusement; but I fancy they generally preferred the arms of our company to their own.

"When eating commenced, they would observe your every mouthful, and doubtless thought us queer people to be using such unnecessary conveniences as

knives and forks. The dinner consists generally of a bowl of chicken broth with rice in it, and after this the chickens themselves; the vegetable part consisting of the bread of the country, which is flour and water baked in thin cakes, about three times the size of this half-sheet, but round in form. It is not good, for, owing to their mode of treading out the corn on the ground, it becomes very gritty; and, besides this, it is not always of the best flavour in the world; but a hungry stomach is an excellent remedy for this, and in a short time you become accustomed to it.

"The villages from a little distance are picturesque enough, and in the light of the morning or evening are a very beautiful colour. From the midst of some, perhaps, rise the minarets of a Turkish mosque, usually of elegant, rich form; but, also, usually ruinous to the last degree. On entering a village, you see the men smoking, and the women doing all the labouring part of the business of life; and I have seen women with their dress up to the middle of the thigh, mixing the mud and straw of which they construct their houses, the legs above the knee plastered all over with this unbecoming paint. This, when properly mixed, is plastered on with the hands by the same persons; and, with the exception of ploughing, I have seen men in the country engaged in but little else.

"The water-carriers (women) are very capital subjects for the brush; and they rush along with great celerity under pitchers of water of no small size,

carrying the same upon the head on little pads made for the purpose. Their dress is a loose blue shirt with wide sleeves ; it is open in front, and a cincture is girt round the waist, the robe being pulled up a little in front and allowed to fall over. On their arms they wear silver bracelets, and it is their custom to tattoo their faces and hands and arms of a bluish tinge. They also wear a head-dress, the sides of which are decorated with piastres, a species of coin resembling tin, and a little bigger than the shilling ; its value is about twopence.

"You would, my dear Powell, indeed you would, have become perfectly rabid at the sight of their groups round the wells on the seashore, with, perhaps, a string of camels grunting and growling, the whole recommended to you by the overture of the sea roaring in, gently as any sucking-dove, and covering the golden beach, which glitters dazzlingly bright, with long lines of whitish foam. The unaffected simplicity of their attitudes is, to an artist, perfectly ravishing ; and from these untutored children of nature, Michael Angelo and Raphael himself might gain knowledge—might improve their taste. *At times the excitement of these scenes has been enough to turn the brain of an ordinary weak-minded person like myself, and often I have lain down at night with my imagination so full of wild vagaries that I have really and truly doubted of my own sanity. The heat of the day, perhaps, contributed somewhat to this, or the motion of riding is also another reason for this unusual activity of the fancy.*

"The horses that one gets here are but very sorry jades, generally speaking, and their paces frequently would puzzle Ducrow himself to adapt himself to the motions; they stumble, and unless you (the rider) are very cautious in the matter, you fly over the head like a spread-eagle. I have had two immersions in the water, and more falls on the ground than I can at present count up; notwithstanding, no ill results have ensued, and a good jolt is all that I have suffered in consequence.

"The most serious of all the inconveniences I have met with is that of the curiosity of the people, which has frequently compelled me to desist from sketching what I have been most desirous to obtain. At Damascus especially this was the case, and I have had a crowd of some hundred people gaping about me—those close to me turning over the leaves of one side of my book, I drawing on the opposite side of it; and those further off content with staring at me as if I was a curiosity. One day, whilst thus annoyed, the crowd became unusually obstreperous, and I was followed by a mob, hooting; and some even proceeded to pelt me with the husks of corn and some such missiles. I got away, however, quite safe from any personal injury; and I beg leave to assure you that the like of this affair is anything but flattering or comfortable to one's feelings.

"Next to the mosques and khans, the fountains and baths are worthy of particular attention; the fountains especially are most elegant in their design, and profusely ornamented with arabesque; they are

part of the wall, or rather are built in the wall, the arches and troughs slightly projecting into the street.

"The bazaars, especially one near—(I don't know where, nor do I care, nor do you care, for you would be as wise as ever did I know and tell)—it is very high and wide, and roofed with circular arches. From the middle, where I mean to place you, you see the light of the picture included almost entirely in the sky, and led down from its round top by the glitter of the bronzy minaret, which puts your eyes out in the centre of the picture. It is taken up by groups of Turks in light dresses, white large turbans, Bedoween Arabs, mounted, and cantering so gallantly through the street that you wish yourself a born blackguard and robbing mountaineer. Oh, my dear little flower, as you or Joy" (our mutual friend the painter—W. P. F.) "would say, could you but glance on the princely beggary of these imperial ragamuffins, you would beat your breast and gnash your teeth until they came through your lower jaw! Then listen to wild sounds of the tabor, and see the strange dresses of these street musicians; see bubbling water, see bright green trees, dazzling dresses, stately camels, all shook up in such inextricable confusion that you lay down your reason and implore the passenger to hold you tight, lest you should indulge in any rabid feelings towards your linen. I don't care, Powell—I don't care, I say; you can't be wrong in staying your poor deluded steps in any part of this emporium of artistic wealth. I wish I had the gigantic powers of a Shake-

speare, an Otway, or any other way, to tell you of the bigfeelings that the sight of these things generates in me. Grant me, oh, let me but have the power to embody the scenes that I have witnessed, and William Powell Frith shall own at least that his neighbour is fit for some other purpose than the cleaning of shoes. Well, let all this 'gang its ain gait,' and doubtless 'twill be the wrong one for me. I can content me with idly fanning these dreamy sparks until I fancy that they flame.

"We visited Nazareth, we saw the Sea of Galilee, we stayed at Tiberias, we sojourned at Carmel, we have seen the Holy City with all its sights, we have been to Bethlehem, and gone to Jericho, to the Jordan, the Dead Sea, and the convent of St. Saba, through the wild passes of Engaddi by moonlight. At Jericho our party, consisting of a jolly rollicking lot of midshipmen and lieutenants from the *Hecate* and *Venom*, were surrounded by a party of Arabs, mounted and armed in all the rich mode of their tribes. I regret being behind at the time the charge was made upon the party, as I am told they came on with the wildest gesticulations, and brandishing their spears and *jerids*, and even presenting their pistols, full-cocked, close to their heads. We were under the protection of a sheik, who soon rode up and saluted the chief of their party in the mode of the desert, kissing both sides of his cheeks, and receiving the salutation of the other. We, that is, Sir Thomas Phillips and myself, with one or two of the officers, rode into their circle, and then, oh!

Billy, you would have burst with vexation at seeing the naked bellies and limbs of some of the fierce-looking people. One man had on a pair of boots whose antiquity was, or is, coeval with Abraham, the patriarch of his tribe; his trousers were of common cotton, and appeared at some time or another to have cottoned" (here the letter is unintelligible), "they were so shabby; his vest was a sort of sack open all down the front, and his stomach seemed particularly desirous of escaping the restraint of bonds; his hair was long and matted, wildly blowing about in the breeze; in his hand he held a long lance of reed, with two tufts of ostrich feathers thereon, and by his side was suspended a sabre of the Damascus form, but which was dressed in a very shabby scabbard of leather.

"This was nothing as compared with the appearance of the sheik, whose black grizzly beard would make capital brushes, being as obdurate in semblance as his hard piercing eye of darkest brown; his turban was of worsted, or something that had been worsted in the chase for colour, if ever it had a chase for that. What nonsense! Never mind. He led us into his village, and there more of the motley crew were waiting for our reception. To show our confidence in him, he desired that we would enter a kind of courtyard where there was a large pool of dirty water, covered by a rude thatch, and supported on posts. Beneath this, on the margin of the water, he sat down, and his chiefs, or chief warriors, beside him, smoking and calmly eyeing the party.

"On moving to depart, a request was made for the loan of *baksheesh*, another word for plunder, or unjust demands on the traveller's purse. The sum asked was five hundred piastres, but through the management of our servant one hundred only were paid.

"You are perfectly silly if you imagine that you can imagine anything at all to compare with these people. Perhaps it seems an unnecessary thing to repeat this same thing, but say it over twenty times, and you may then possibly have some notion. Their romantic, erratic, *latronatic*, Arabic character was much assisted by the fire round which we sat at night on the borders of the Dead Sea. Three or four had been sent as a guard to protect us from any others that might be wandering near, and to see the naked villains walk up to the fire would have walked your blood up to boiling heat.

"The moon rose after some time, and we, having stayed two hours, mounted and rode through the mountains of Engaddi. This, again, was rather rich-looking to my eyes (diseased eyes), like the end of the world. Many parts was as the extinct craters of volcanoes; and some of the mountains had bent themselves in the most extravagant way.

"I use all superlatives, and you will be superlatively right to wind yourself up to such a pitch, as these never fail, or cannot fail, to do on the spectator whenever you desire to paint anything that shall reach the hearts of your victims. Don't, now, suppose that I mean to say those who buy your pictures

are victims, although, excuse me for saying, they don't show much taste in preferring your pictures to mine. That's nothing, however. I shall never be jealous of you now, for I've got *open my mind*, yes, *opened my mind*, and mind what I say, it's uncommon good soil, so soil not your lips by the traduction or reduction of my induction in this manner. And now, if this is not enough for your money, please to score up to my account what you consider the balance due to you, and if I live to return, I'll pay you in good hard cash. How many times I have thought over the 'clique,' with all its associations of fun and frolic mixed—certainly with a big grain of folly, I need not assure you. Often I am with you in fancy, discussing the merits of our immortal art, immortal through Raphael and his gang of compeers. How fine this would sound to another than an artist, but to him how true! Never mind the sneers of the world, my gentle youth, but keep your pecker up, and don't part with a grain of enthusiasm; it is your soul, and you have no right to part with that for such reasons. What are your pictures at present under consideration? But I'm gammoning myself by asking a vanity. You cannot write to me, it is so far to send, and thundering nonsense I'm writing. But I wish I could hear of your whereabouts, of how the world wags with all of you.

"O'Neil is certainly deserving of much better fortune than to be living where I saw him *last*. Then there's Joy, Ward, and all the rest, even our sublimated friend Gibson, who has made me talk

more trash than anybody I know. S——, too, would gladden my eyes by the sight of him. I can scarcely refrain from laughing when I think of his pictures, not because I think them badly thought, but they certainly were badly wrought. What a treat to stand by and hear him explain his works, done in the purest Scotch we could desire to hear; then his poetry, his philosophy, and all, were to me always such an enjoyment, unfeigned, because I think him right. Never, surely, were two such enthusiasts matched as he and Gibson, with his windmill arms; but with those arms he grinds better flour than wind. Still, like myself, he is one of the great unappreciated. Never mind, we shall all go to the workhouse together, and there in some corner philosophize over (illegible); and should the allowance be short, how will that stimulate our appetites for words! We shall rave, we shall tear each other in our eagerness to explain the why, the wherefore; but I shall take the precaution to cut Gibson's nails when he sleeps. I doubt if he would be pleased with this; but show it him, and you must in your enjoyment be careful to exculpate me from anything like malice.

"How are the McIans, and all the bodies of that clique? Has strong necessity compelled them to eat the stubs of their pencils, or is the stock of oil and varnish yet unexhausted? These things, and many more, I could go on speaking of, but see, the end is just in view. What is done about the House of Lords? Are they to be done by the painters, or who? I hope Eastlake has rhetoric or logic enough

to persuade that this is indispensable. Well, fat meat, and tin to buy it, be it with you all, *ever so much longer* than you deserve. See my father and say farewell. Tell him to call upon Mr. Roberts, and present my esteem and regard. Give that same to the members of your family, and have, if you like, the excruciating respect of

"RICHARD DADD.

"I've so many friends I forgot to mention Humby and Egg. Tell 'em they're bricks."

CHAPTER X.

AN OLD-FASHIONED PATRON.

In the first volume of my published reminiscences, I have casually mentioned Mr. Gibbons amongst a few picture-collectors of the old school, whose love for art and genuine enjoyment in its possession were the sole guides in the accumulation of their treasures. Collectors have multiplied greatly since the days of Sheepshanks, Vernon, Miller, Bell, Newsham, etc.; but the real love of art for art's sake, which caused the men I have named to fill their galleries, exists only in a few cases. Investment, a love of display, and a spirit of speculation—without the least enjoyment in their acquisitions—are the guiding stars of many of the picture-buyers of the present day. I made Mr. Gibbons's acquaintance through the pen long before I knew him in the flesh; he was a most kind and generous patron, and I speak of him with gratitude and affection, for he had a great influence for good on my early career. He was a confirmed invalid, whose life—I quite believe—would have been almost unendurable without his pictures and his books. I select his letters for pub-

lication, and recommend their perusal as examples of what the picture collector should be; and I heartily wish the young painter no worse a fate than to fall into the hands of such a friend as Mr. Gibbons was to me. The first of my exhibited pictures attracted Mr. Gibbons's notice, as his letters prove; and he never ceased to "pat me on the back"—to use his own words—till death relieved him from a life of suffering, and took from me an old and valued friend. The first of the series of letters which follows, relates to my picture from the "Vicar of Wakefield," previously sold, and lent to me for exhibition at Birmingham; that immature work was accompanied by another from Sterne, now in the Jones Collection at South Kensington. I now let Mr. Gibbons speak.

"Westbourne Road,
"Edgbaston,
"Birmingham,
"Sept. 16, 1843.

"SIR,

"There is a picture of yours in the Birmingham Exhibition that pleases me exceedingly, and I should have purchased it at once, had I not been anticipated by a more fortunate man. I allude to the scene from the 'Vicar of Wakefield.' If you have the material and the inclination, I should like a repetition of it. Be good enough to let me know whether you will undertake it, how long you shall be about it, and what the price will be. Could you hit upon another subject from the same delightful tale that would serve as a companion? Have you

anything of a similar character in hand? Your reply to these questions will oblige me.

"I am, sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"JOHN GIBBONS.

"Your *other* picture is gone, or I should have bought it; it is *very good indeed*."

"1, Euston Place,
"Leamington,
"Warwickshire,
"Sept. 28, 1843.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have been from home, or I should have replied to your letter at once. Perhaps you can carry on a *smaller* picture *pari passu* with Mr. Briscoe's. If so, you may set about one for me—something like the scene from the 'Sentimental Journey' will do. The price of that, I believe, was forty guineas, but I do not wish to tie you strictly down to that amount. The more important picture I should like to have some communication with you about before you begin it. I know it would be your wish to please me, as much as it would be mine to be pleased; and, to ensure this, I should like to have a general knowledge of the subject that you propose to adopt, and of the mode in which you intend to carry it out. I have pictures by Mulready, Etty, Webster, Danby, Uwins, etc., and this is the plan that I have always proceeded upon, and the consequence is that I have never been disappointed,

but much the contrary. Perhaps you will favour me with a line or two in reply within a week, as I am not sure of remaining here much longer.

"I am, dear sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"JOHN GIBBONS.

"Let me say that if it is at all convenient to you, any part of the money is at your service the moment you begin to work for me.

"I had a picture of yours offered me one of the last days; it was good, but I did not much like it. The same thing might happen under a *blind* commission, and this would vex both of us. The subject was from the 'Twelfth Night'—Malvolio, etc."

"1, Euston Place,

"Leamington,

"Warwickshire,

"Oct. 7, 1843.

"DEAR SIR,

"There was enough in the first picture of yours that I ever saw ('Imogen and Iachimo') to make me *feel* that I should like your works. Shakespeare is rather a dangerous fellow to meddle with, as you intimate in your letter. To those that have enjoyed him in the closet (the only place, I think, in which he can be worthily enjoyed), it is almost impossible to embody his characters satisfactorily, or they have found ideals for themselves perhaps, and are intolerant of any wide departure from them; and to those that only know him on the stage, a natural

treatment of his scenes would probably seem insipid, tame. I am old enough to remember the Shakespeare Gallery, and a wretched affair it was. I think that the only picture in it that *lives*, or deserved to live, was Sir Joshua's 'Cardinal Beaufort.' His 'Puck' was purely ideal, and, therefore, not a case in point; in fact, it appears to me that theatrical subjects are seldom good ones. If treated theatrically, they are vile, and if not, they are almost sure to disturb some settled preconception, and we miss the 'old familiar faces'—the O'Neill, the Kean, the Munden—and are loth to accept of other representations. All the difficulties may be overcome, I know, as Sir Joshua has overcome them in his 'Cardinal Beaufort;' Leslie, in his 'Taming of the Shrew;' and Newton, in his 'Captain Macheath,' etc., etc.

"I hardly know how I got into this strain, but perhaps it was to show you how hard it would be to please me, if you have gone to the *acted* drama for the subject of the little picture that you are about to paint for me. However, if it be so, never mind what I have said; an artist himself is the best judge of what he can do the best. The Liverpool Exhibition there is no chance of my seeing. Leamington (the place where I am) is twenty-five miles on the London side of Birmingham, and Liverpool is about one hundred miles on the *other* side of it. Tell me the subject of the picture you have there, the size, the scale upon which the *figure* is painted, and the price. Perhaps, if it does not sell, you may as well order it to be sent to me at Edgbaston; it is all in

the way, and I can tell in a minute whether it will suit me or not. I should like to know, too, the subject of the little picture that you have in anticipation for me (and, as I hope, in actual progress); but don't tell me unless you like it. Just let me mention, while I think of it, that I *love finish*, even to the *minutest details*. I know the time it takes, and that it must be paid for; but this I do not object to. I wish you were likely to come into our neighbourhood, and you could see at once the tendencies of my taste. My collection consists entirely of modern art, and I may venture to say that it is a good one. If you are '*recreating*,' as your stay in the country seems to indicate, you might spend a week pleasantly enough in running down *here*, and onward to Birmingham and Liverpool. There are sights and scenes about Leamington well worth a visit; for instance, Warwick Castle, Kenilworth Castle, Guy's Cliff, etc., and a most beautiful county, though it is flat. The railroads make nothing of a trip like this, and if it will suit you to take it, I shall be happy to see you. To be sure, from the state of my health, I cannot play the host very satisfactorily, but this you would excuse. I propose remaining here till the end of October, and then returning home.

"I am, dear sir,

"Your faithful servant,

"JOHN GIBBONS.

"The charm of your 'Sentimental Journey'

picture is in the head that you repainted ; it is just the thing—artless, gay, innocent, and very pretty (full of the right *kind* of beauty). Sterne is good, but hardly comes up to what we mean by a 'happy hit.' Is 'The Husband' well drawn ?"

"My dear Sir,

"I don't care about the *price* of the 'Mary' at all, and it shall be mine or not, just as you like. I certainly, as I have told you before, should prefer a subject from the 'Vicar,' or some such book —a subject that comes nearer home to one's every-day sympathies. So that if you find a purchaser for the 'Mary,' and will undertake a commission of this kind, I should like it best ; but if she does not go off, consider her mine, and I will send you the money at any time. I ought to have answered your former kind, and, to me, very interesting letter long before this ; but I put it off from day to day, and I dare say you know what generally happens when this is done, and how 'To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,' etc., etc.

"I like your account of Frost's picture, it will be sure to satisfy me ; where there is beauty, finish, and taste, I care but little about 'originality.' One of the best pictures that I ever saw of Turner's, he called 'Port Ruysdail,' of whose manner it was a decided imitation, and meant to be so ; but it was none the worse for *that*. I have a landscape by Danby, that is Claude all over, but I like it none the less ; if a man *can* pull the bow of Ulysses, to me

he *is* Ulysses. I am rather inclined to take up the cudgels for Boxall. When you talk of him, Stone, etc., as the painters of mere 'prettiness,' you must be thinking of the things that they were fools enough to do for the 'annuals.' I dare say that both are heartily ashamed of themselves for it; indeed, I know that Boxall is—but who *raves* about Boxall? Poor fellow! he has no such luck, or he would not spend his days in the drudgery of portrait-painting. Whether he can do much in any other way, I don't think that he knows much better than I do, for nobody gives him the opportunity of trying. The absurd quotation that he stuck to his little picture I tried to get him to omit—it is sheer nonsense where it stands in the Bible, and certainly his illustration of it has no tendency to make it anything else.

"I cannot see why a religious sentiment may not be embodied in painting—surely it has been done in sculpture, and beautifully too—and the character of Boxall's little thing is *essentially sculpturesque.*

"Can poets personify a sentiment, a passion? What is Collins's most popular poem (mind, I don't say his *best*), his 'Ode to the Passions,' but a succession of pictures of this very kind in words? I am not fond of allegory either in painting or poetry, but it may be well and beautifully done notwithstanding. What objection have you to Sir Joshua's 'Faith, Hope, Charity,' etc.? You say there can be no poetry that has not *nature* for its basis. This is vague. You may include in the *word* everything to

which 'the poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,' can give 'a habitation and a name,' and then you are right enough; but 'Puck' and 'Ariel' have little to do with *nature* in the common sense of the word. I am writing very unconnectedly, lest my 'To-morrow' fit should overtake me again, so you must excuse it, for I am much hurried to-day. You ask me if I like newspaper criticism. I dare say I *estimate* it just as you do; but I always read it when it comes in my way—sometimes its absurdity, sometimes its malice, and now and then its cleverness, amuses me. I was glad to see that the Prince had fallen in love with your friend's 'Ruth;' it will give him a *lift*, and this is all he can want, if he *will do justice to himself*. When I *felt* that the pyramidal form was carried to excess in his 'Ruth,' I did not know it was his picture; neither did I know that it had been objected to by him. Artifice is a good thing—the pyramidal form is good—but your friend should remember that 'Ars est *celare* artem.' I shall be anxious to see the daguerreotypes. Knowing your *process*, I think I can form a pretty good judgment from them. Drop me a line by the post when you send them off. Excuse this scrambling letter, and believe me,

"My dear sir,

"Yours very truly,

"J. GIBBONS.

"Depend upon it, that any criticisms you give me on contemporaries are *safe*.

"I hope to get to town in spring. Do you think I can take a ready-furnished house in the Regent's Park for six months? Do you know a good house-agent to whom I could write about it? What I want is *quiet*."

"Westbourne Road,
"Edgbaston,
"Dec. 27, 1843.

"DEAR SIR,

"I congratulate you on the sale of the 'Merry Wives;' but I don't know whether I am quite pleased at it either, for though I was afraid to buy it 'unsight, unseen' (as they say in our country), I had a strong presentiment that if it had reached Edgbaston it would have gone no further. It was a bold attempt, for, in the whole circle of the drama, there is nothing like this play in its variety of character, or what they had used to call 'humours;' and they are of a kind, too, that exhibit themselves in externals that modify the surface, and therefore the very things for the painter's art; and more than this, though each character is strongly individualized, it is none the less the type of a *class*, and a permanent class, so that as long as man is man, or society society (in anything like its present form), a picture worthy of the subject will lose but little of either its vitality or interest.

"The 'Canterbury Pilgrims,' that Stothard failed in (as *I* think) so egregiously, may, at first sight, appear to be as happily chosen; but I do not think it so: many of the characters there were the mere

growth of the time, and passed away with it—they were not *men* so much as personified *manners*. I venture to say that no one, without Chaucer in his hand, could even guess at what Stothard meant by more than half of his *dramatis personæ*. To be sure, he was without the appropriate power (I am an infidel as to his possessing any of much value in any high degree); but this was not all. If Hogarth could have embodied any conceptions but his own (which he could not), what a glorious thing he would have made of the 'Merry Wives!' but I recollect no other painter that could have done it full justice. The more your merit if you have done it. I wish I had seen this picture, for, from what I *have* seen of yours, I know you would not have been satisfied with the commonplace or the caricature, with 'figures to let,' or gross exaggerations. If it ever comes within my reach, I will tell you exactly what I think of it.

"I am glad to see that you are making rapid progress with what you have in hand. Surely *now* you will tell me what the incident may be upon which you are at work for me; it will interest me much to think of it, and to give it shape after my own fashion. There are some artists, I know, who object to this—who, like Jupiter, will not suffer their Minervas to be seen till they are perfect and armed at all points. If such be your rule and your humour, I cannot expect you to infringe upon it for me; and I tell you beforehand, that if I get you so far, I shall be very apt to ask you for a little more—for a scratch or two with your pen, for instance, that will indicate

in a general way the *how* as well as the *what*. Having given you fair warning, I leave it to you. Remember, that if the subject grows upon you as you proceed, I am always ready to alter the price. Let me have *women* in it, be sure of *that*—an 'Olivia,' or one of the same family. I dare say you can beget something like her again if you try. You will think me a very long-winded correspondent.

"I am, dear sir,

"Very truly yours,

"J. GIBBONS.

"What think you of the 'Spectator's Club' as a subject? It is not one I should choose for myself (there are no women in it), but the characters are not too many, and they may be well discriminated. Sir Roger, perhaps, would be as hard to hit off as Falstaff himself—'terrible name.'"

"Edgbaston,

"Feb. 16, 1844.

"DEAR SIR,

"I am sincerely obliged to you for your account of the Exhibition. As my health disables me from coming to see these things, this is the only way in which I can get *at* them. To be sure, one's imagination is but a poor substitute for one's eyes; but we must 'bear the ills we have,' and make the best of them. I have got over my longing for the 'Merry Wives,' and now feel sure that I shall much prefer a subject from the 'Vicar,' or some such book; it will have a more enduring interest for me. There

is nothing in the 'Merry Wives' to touch the heart or the affections, nothing from which one could weave a story or a dream—a hearty laugh or two, and all is over.

"Danby is an old friend of mine, and I am glad to hear of him in his strength again. For some years (from one cause and another) he has been under a sort of eclipse. He is a man of original genius, and in his own walk—the romantic, the poetical, the visionary (in landscape)—I think him unequalled. You cannot, I dare say, remember his earlier works. I have three of them, which I hope to show you some day. One, 'The Enchanted Island,' I believe to be in its kind without a rival. I could have told you beforehand that whatever colours he chose to give to his foam would remain upon it, in spite of criticism. I made some inquiry about the Etty that you praised so highly. It is sold; but I fancy, from what I heard of it, that it is fitter for the antechamber of a gay young bachelor than the walls of a *family* man whose head is gray; and, besides, the price, *two hundred pounds*, was too much, so that I don't regret its being gone. A friend of mine (Danby, indeed) bought me Frost's picture, 'The Dream.' If you go to the gallery again, tell me what you think of it, will you? Boxall's little thing is altogether ideal. It is a personification of Hope or Faith, or some religious sentiment, and therefore one does not look for 'Nature' (in the common sense of the word) in it. If it has an abstract beauty it is enough. I am not fond of this

class of pictures; but variety is good in a collection, and one or two of these it is as well to have. They are something like allegorical poetry, which quickly tires; there is no food for thought in it. Your friend's 'Ruth' I went to look at *specially* two or three times while it was here. It was the only picture in the room worth it, except your own, and I was strongly inclined to buy it. The Orpah I thought perfect, the mother-in-law sufficiently good; but the Ruth did not satisfy me: and no wonder, for how is it possible to reproduce adequately the utterer of those beautiful words — the most tender ever spoken—but I thought more might have been made of her than was. What I disliked the most (and the feeling grew upon me every time I revisited the picture) was the evident determination to force the group into the pyramidal form. Even the very necks of Naomi and Ruth seemed to me to be unduly lengthened for this special purpose. More—this called away one's attention from the *sentiment*, and prevented it from telling with an absorbing force. The 'conception' seemed to me original and happy, no easy matter in a subject so simple and so hackneyed. The flesh was hardly the thing, either in texture or colour; but I am doubtful about the truth of this remark. However, make what drawbacks one may, the picture is the work of no common man. It *ought* to be the forerunner of great doings, and it will be the painter's own fault, I think, if he does not reach the *level* of *Eastlake*, and this I mean for high praise. I have told you just what I thought,

not because I suppose my opinion to be of much value, but because you desire it. You must not forget to send me the daguerreotype of the picture you have in hand. No one shall see it but my wife, and it shall be returned immediately. When you have time to think of a new subject, tell me what it is. This is a long scrawl.

"Believe me, my dear sir,

"Yours truly,

"J. GIBBONS."

"Edgbaston,

"Monday.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Thank you for your letter. I will answer first the part of it that comes first. Even if I had the talent for 'slashing' (which I have not), I could find no opportunity of bringing it to bear upon this exhibition of ours (at Birmingham). It is a dead-alive assemblage of mediocrities that one can neither have the pleasure of abusing nor praising. As friend Dogberry says, 'It is most tolerable, and not to be endured.' There is a decent Stanfield (Mr. Briscoe's), a middling Bothwell, a worse than middling Creswick, and Poole's 'Plague,' which, clever as it is, I hate to look at.

"I will send you the catalogue, and I think you will stare at the company into which you have got, and be apt to exclaim, 'Why, who the devil are all these?—a question that I am not worthy to answer, but Messrs. Watts and Mason (critics) will. Take in our journal for the next month, and you shall see,

not only who they are, but what they are, though I think you had better not, or the glorious doings that you will be sure to read of might dazzle and dismay you.

"Your picture (the best in the room, certainly) is well hung, and looks well; but I still feel that there is something wrong about its general effect, that the eye is not fully satisfied. I hardly know why. The story is capitally told, the character is good, the local colour good, the keeping good; so that the defect, if there be any, is in the management of the light and shade, the chiaroscuro. I believe myself that the whole of the background is in too light a key, and that thus the repose and harmony of the composition is disturbed. It is something like an interesting tale told in a monotonous and feeble voice, or a charming air with a weak accompaniment. These are obscure illustrations of what I mean—in fact, I hardly know what I mean. I like what you tell me of the picture that you have in hand. I have no fear about it. Your plan of carrying on the whole composition *pari passu* must be better than working it up bit by bit; indeed, I should think it was the only plan that would *ensure* a perfect consistency, and a due subordination of parts. You must be thinking over the Shakespeare subject. I want you to have a hit at Leslie on his strongest ground, for I have made up my mind that you are to floor him one of these days." [A very foolish idea. —W. P. F.]

"Don't be surprised if I walk in before the week

is out. I am stringing up my nerves for another try, as you say, of Shakespeare. I am 'awfully afraid' of London, but I am always hankering after it. In the hope of being able to bother you *viva voce* ere long, I will cease to do it now.

"I am, dear sir,

"Yours very truly,

"J. GIBBONS.

"I have only been to our exhibition once, and it was a gloomy day, too; so perhaps it may improve upon a further acquaintance."

"Edgbaston,

"Aug. 31, 1844.

"MY DEAR SIR,

'I was very glad to hear from you, though certainly rather vex'd at your running by me without a pause; it shows clearly enough that your first visit has left you without any stomach for a second. It is fortunate, I think, that the Stoke Pogis Churchyard will suit you as the scene of your picture. All the world is familiar with Gray's 'Elegy,' and to find one's self in *his* churchyard will realize your subject by giving it a local habitation and a name, and more than that, it will raise up many a feeling in delightful harmony with it. In the picture, and the poem, too, I think it is the *suggestive* power that *tells* more deeply and permanently than any other, and that therefore the more you can widen their sphere of association the better they become. You are mistaken about the 'Holy Eyes.' I like them

much, perhaps quite as much as the 'Wicked Ones,' but both I found might be improved by a touch or two. When I come to see them again, it is likely enough that I may feel differently; the 'wicked eyes' *are* so, and very charmingly so, but I have seen more dangerous ones. Pope has described them capitally in a single line:

"'The sleepy eye that speaks the melting soul.'

"I am glad 'Queen Mary' is gone; it was a good picture, and cheap enough; but I do not regret it, even though *it is gone*, which sometimes makes a difference. I shall always hanker after your two from the 'Vicar,' and your 'Merry Wives.' They were full of story and character, and both hit off to admiration. I shall get you to paint me a Shakespearean subject one of these days. You can be thinking of it (from his comedies). If *I* understand him, you come nearer the mark than Leslie. To be sure, I have been told that your 'Merry Wives' was extravagant, that you had made broader what was already too broad; in fact, that you had caricatured caricatures; but I do not think so. I believe the play to be a *true thing*, and your picture a *true thing*, neither the one nor the other carried a single line too far. I have formed my taste for these matters, I confess, upon what Hogarth has done (in cognate subjects), and if he has debauched it, why, it cannot be help'd; but I do not think he has, for I shall die in the faith that of *all* painters he was the nearest perfection in his own domain. I

think he *reached* it, and that is more than I could say of any other, even of Claude in landscape.

"The size of the figures in the picture you are about is just what I should have wished it to be; but I would have you adopt the scale that is most familiar to your hand, and that will admit of the *highest finish.* The canvas might be of any dimensions that you prefer. I hope to be in town next week, and you will be sure to see me soon after I arrive.

"I am, my dear sir,

"Yours very truly,

"J. GIBBONS.

"I wish you had called. I could have shown you a (small) Maclise, a Goodall, and (I think) a Webster that you would have liked to see."

"17, Hanover Terrace.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I must thank you for your letter *at once.* I am delighted at the effect that Leslie's picture has produced upon you; it gives a positive certainty to my own opinion, for no man living can understand a picture of that class better than yourself.

"What you say at the end of your letter is very gratifying to me, and *very honourable to your own feelings. You owe your success to your own merit.* I should be glad to think that I had rendered you an *important* service, but I do not flatter myself with having done more for you than *this.* I discovered the power that was in you before other men, perhaps,

and I *patted you on the back at the right time;* no man but a very vain one can have full self-confidence at the beginning of his career (and it is worse for him if he has it); but you are not a vain man, and I think it likely that my opinion, decidedly expressed as it was, may have had the effect of strengthening your nerves a little, and this may have been useful, for 'faint heart never won fair lady' nor anything else. Add to this, that I spoke of you upon all occasions (when it was likely to be useful) as I felt and thought—so that you see you owe *me* but little, for *this is all.*

"I shall call as I ride by to-morrow, but if I don't find you it is of no consequence. On Sunday I shall be very glad to see you and Mr. Elmore, and I will take you on to Mulready's. Excuse haste.

"Yours very sincerely,

"J. GIBBONS."

CHAPTER XI.

ANOTHER DINNER AT IVY COTTAGE.

In heading this chapter, I say *another* dinner at Ivy Cottage, because I have already written of one dinner in my previous volumes. I venture to hope that my readers who assisted at that entertainment were well enough satisfied with it to be able and willing to endure another, and with the old company, so long as the dishes are changed. It may be remembered that Ivy Cottage in Black Lion Lane—now Queen's Road—Bayswater, was for many years the residence of Egg, R.A., and that he gathered round his table such men as Dickens, Forster, Leech, Lemon (editor of *Punch*), G. H. Lewes, Mulready, Webster, and others.

I had already made Dickens' acquaintance when "The Guild of Literature and Art" was inaugurated; its objects being the assistance of unfortunate authors and artists, either by gifts of money, or in providing for them permanent homes. Lord Lytton gave a portion of his estate for the erection of small houses or cottages; he also wrote a play, or plays, to be performed by members of the guild, and that example

was followed by Wilkie Collins. Dickens was a born actor, and Douglas Jerrold and Frank Stone almost seemed to me to deserve that appellation; but it would be too much to use such a phrase in favour of any of the rest of the company, notably of my friend Egg, whose great merit was that of being always "word-perfect" in his part. Egg was a tolerably well-educated man, but, either from a defective ear or from Cockney surroundings (he was born in Coventry Street), he had some peculiarities in his pronunciation which were embarrassing and sometimes ludicrous; he failed to see the difference between *viâ* Ostend and *viâr* Ostend, even when it was pointed out to him; and in the part of a poor poet for which he was cast in a play of Bulwer's, the defect I speak of became very palpable.

The curtain rises upon a miserable garret, where the poet is discovered writing, with evidences of extreme poverty about him. The scene opens with a speech—if I remember correctly—in which he contrasts his present straits with a former and happier condition of life. The first words were, "Years ago when patrons were——" something or other. Egg always began, "Here's a go! when patrons," etc., etc. I spent some minutes in repeating the words as he pronounced them, and as they should be pronounced, but he entirely failed to realize the difference of intonation, and it was, "Here's a go!" so long as Egg played the part.

Egg's acquaintance—and afterwards extreme intimacy—with Dickens dates from the beginning of

the amateur performances by the Guild of Literature and Art. He and I were asked at the same time to join the company. Egg consented; I declined, partly because I did not feel disposed to make myself supremely ridiculous, also because I felt sure I could not learn any part, however short; and even if I could manage to learn it, I should forget every word when I found myself near the footlights. Egg was more courageous, and in his time played many parts; but never successfully enough to cause regret that he had devoted himself to the art of painting.

The amateur company, composed of men of such mark, was a very enviable society, and most of them became Egg's fast friends. To be thrown during pleasurable excursions into the companionship of Dickens, Leech, Forster, and many others, was delightful, and, I am sure, fully appreciated and enjoyed by Egg.

Before I allow my reader to have his dinner, from which I am keeping him somewhat unreasonably, I will try to give him an idea of Egg's dining-room—now, with the rest of the house, replaced by shops in the Queen's Road. It was a long, low, narrow room, with a round dining-table in the middle; the walls rather profusely covered with engravings by the elder Reynolds (whose widow was Egg's landlady), from the works of his great namesake. At the end of the room, flanked on each side by engravings, was a pencil drawing of great beauty, representing a handsome young man—the head and bust only—and below the drawing was a small piece of discoloured

linen with an inscription, which had been inserted into the cardboard on which the drawing was made. A large apartment attached to Egg's dining-room was for many years the workroom of S. W. Reynolds and his assistants, and afterwards Egg's studio. Of the drawing and its original I shall have more to say presently. Now "to the banquet!"

Egg possessed an admirable cook, and his wines were perfect. In the height of our enjoyment, Dickens proposed a vote of thanks to the cook.

"Let us have her in, bless her! and I will address her in appropriate language."

"No doubt you would," said Egg; "but, like most good cooks, she has an uncertain temper, and I shouldn't advise you to try it—she wouldn't understand your 'appropriate language' as meant seriously, and she might resent it in her own language, which, I believe, is sometimes described by her kitchen companions as 'bad language.'"

"Yes," said Lemon, "cooks are difficult people to deal with, as I found the other day when I was dining with a large party at Blank's. You all know little Blank—gives capital dinners. Well, the soup was all right, and the fish followed—cooked, as usual, to perfection—the remains were removed; then came an uncommonly long pause. Blank looked at Mrs. Blank and Mrs. B. looked at Mr. B.—matters became embarrassing. Presently the butler appeared, and whispered to his mistress—the lady changed colour, and said:

"'Good gracious! how horrible!'

"'What is the matter?' said Blank. 'Where is the rest of the dinner?'

"'It's in the kitchen, sir,' replied the butler, 'and cook says there isn't one of the dishes that satisfies her, and she won't allow them to come up.'

"'She won't allow! We will soon see about that. What on earth can the woman mean?' exclaimed the master of the house as he rose from his chair.

"'I beg your pardon, sir,' interposed the butler, 'I think you had best not go alone into the kitchen, if such is your intentions, for cook, I am sorry to say, has been drinking hard, and she threatens to murder the first person as touches one of the dishes.'

"'Murder! I'll murder her!' said the host, as he turned to leave the room.

"'My dear,' cried Mrs. Blank, 'pray be careful. You know the woman's violent temper when she is sober, and what it must be when she is—oh, Mr. Lemon, do go with my husband!'

"'By all means,' said I, as I followed Blank into the kitchen.

"The maids and a most cowardly footman were standing by the dresser, shivering with fear. In the centre of the floor stood the cook—a tremendous female, six feet high, and stout in proportion—armed with the spit, with which she declared she would run the first person through who ventured to touch one of the dishes, which were arranged round her in a circle on the floor.

"'How dare you act in this way, woman?' said Blank.

"'Woman, indeed! Who are you calling woman, I should like to know? Be so good as not to call names, Mr. Blank. My name is Mrs. Green, as you well know, and I have a character to lose, and I am not a-going to lose it through that dratted kitchen-maid, which would be dear at no wages, and find herself. It's all through her as the dinner is spoilt. It ain't fit to put before—— No, you don't,' with a lunge with the spit at the butler, who had tried to snatch one of the dishes.

"B. and I started back, for the drunken woman was really dangerous. We held a whispered consultation.

"'Just make a feint in front of the fury,' said Blank. 'Take care of the spit. She is uncertain on her legs. I will get behind and pinion her.'

"Rather bold this, wasn't it, of a little fellow like Blank? Well, I tried to turn the female warrior's attention to the kitchen-maid, whom I affected to scold for spoiling the dinner, and at the same time made a dash at one of the dishes. This confused the woman, and B. threw his arms about her; but, bless you! they wouldn't meet, and she upset him in a moment.

"'You just try that again,' said the lady, 'and I'll spoil that dress shirt of yours.'

"'Mrs. Green,' said I, 'now do listen to reason. There are several ladies and gentlemen upstairs who are hungry. Do let them have their dinners. Never

mind if it's not quite up to your usual high mark of excellence.'

"'I don't know you, mister,' said the cook, 'and I don't allow no strangers to interfere with me. Get along with you.'

"Here a bright idea occurred to me. I had noticed a large bowl of some kind of sauce standing on the kitchen dresser. I seized it, and threw the contents full in the cook's face. This staggered her, for it was rather warm. Down fell the spit with a clang upon the floor; the butler and footman rushed upon the fury, pinioned her, and carried her in a screeching fit of hysterics into her bedroom."

Those of my readers who can remember Mark Lemon—first editor of *Punch*, and one of the best—may be able to recall the jovial manner with which he told his stories.

After this the conversation became general; books, pictures, and their producers were freely criticised, actors coming in for their share of praise or censure. I remember mentioning the fact of my being at Charles Kean's first appearance in London after his father's death. The play was "Hamlet," the theatre Drury Lane, and the time 1837. I was in the dress-circle, and as soon as the actor appeared a voice behind me exclaimed:

"'Great Heaven! he is like his father come to life again.'"

"Physically, yes; mentally, no," said Dickens. "If you can imagine port wine without its flavour,

you have a fair comparison between the elder Kean and his son."

By this time the dinner had advanced to dessert and cigars.

"Now, Leech, dear boy," said Forster, "sing us a song."

Leech's repertoire was confined to one song, which he sang in a deep voice, "most musical, most melancholy."

"There, that will do," said Dickens. "If you go on any longer you will make me cry. Tell them about the lawyer who lost his client. Yes; I know the story, but they don't, and I would much rather hear it again than any more of that lugubrious song."

"Well, here goes," said Leech. "I suppose there is no one at this table who does not improve his mind by a weekly study of *Punch*—at any rate, all civilized people are familiar with the illustrations which adorn that famous periodical. Amongst those classical works the other day was a high-art drawing by me of a gentleman in a barber's shop who is having his hair cut. He has risen from his chair in a fury, because the little hairdresser has remarked during the operation that the gentleman's hair is getting *very thin at the top*. I contrived that the sheet which envelopes the barber's victim should take something of the form of the Roman toga, and give classic dignity to the figure, as he says, confronting the horrified hairdresser in a threatening attitude:

"'Do you think I came here to be told of my imperfections? I'll *thin your top* for you!'

"Well, I don't see anything particularly laughable in the drawing; but a friend of mine, a lawyer in Bedford Row, did, and he laughed whenever he thought of it. Unfortunately, the day on which the drawing was published had been fixed upon for a consultation upon a matter in which an old and respected client's interests were seriously involved. Legal points of extreme intricacy and difficulty were to be examined and discussed; hopes were to be encouraged, and anxiety appeased. The client had just arrived at a point of extreme gravity, when my unfortunate drawing obtruded itself, and the lawyer repressed a laugh with great difficulty.

"'I see you smile,' said the client. 'Surely the very serious character of the evidence I hope to produce should weigh with——'

"'Oh, I beg your pardon, I was not smiling.'

"'Well, you did something very like it. I must really beg your strictest attention to the facts which are capable of such absolute—— There you go again. My dear sir, what *can* there be in my statement to cause a smile? Pray think of the gravity of my case—how deeply my interests are involved—and give me your most serious attention.'

"'I will—indeed I will,' said the lawyer, mentally devoting me and my drawing to the devil.

"For some minutes the legal gentleman succeeded in banishing the little barber and his victim, but sud-

denly they again ruthlessly seized upon his imagination, and he laughed aloud.

"'Good G—d!' said the client, 'what is there to laugh at in that?'

"'I assure you, sir, I was not laughing at what you told me, which is important indeed, but at a ludicrous idea that crossed my mind.'

"'What business have ludicrous ideas on your mind when it should be fully occupied with business which—excuse my saying so—you are well paid for listening to?'

"The consultation proceeded, serious and more serious grew the details, when, at a moment of extreme importance, the barber came again upon the scene, and the lawyer laughed loud and long.

"'It's no use, I can't get rid of it,' he said to his astonished and indignant visitor. 'There is a drawing in *Punch* to-day that is so irresistibly funny that I can't get it out of my head, and I can't help laughing whenever I think of it.'

"'I don't believe a single word you say,' said the angry client; 'and as you persist in treating my case with such insulting levity, I will go elsewhere, and endeavour to find someone who will attend to me. As to you, sir, I will never trouble you again on this or any other matter.'

"That," said Leech, "is how my friend lost his client."

"Let us gamble," said Dickens.

Accordingly a game was played by starting little balls through a multitude of upright wires fixed upon

an oblong board, and called "Races." Stakes were made, and a number of balls being started at the top of an inclined plane, the one that wriggled its way first through the wires won the stake, each player backing his favourite ball. I need not say that the stakes were always limited; but on this special occasion Dickens lost all his loose silver, and when called upon to stake, he took off his watch and chain and gravely placed them upon the board. We objected to the value of the property as a departure from our rules, we being a "limited liability" gambling company.

"Well," said he, "you rogues have ruined me, so let us go into Egg's shop and see some of his goods."

On our return to the dining-room, after kindly criticising Egg's work, Dickens paused before the pencil-drawing with its linen appendage (which I have previously spoken of in this chapter), and said to Egg:

"What is the history of this? Can you tell us? Who is this good-looking young fellow? and what is the meaning of this discoloured stuff, which looks as if it had been white at one time?"

"Yes," said Egg; "it was white at one time, but that time is long ago. Sit down all of you, and I will tell you about it. The room you have just left, where I work, was built by Reynolds, the engraver, about 1815, or thereabouts. A boy named Cousins was apprenticed to him about that time to learn the art of engraving. The boy's parents were very poor, and the lad had been their main support by making

pencil likenesses, which he executed with wonderful skill. This practice with the pencil was of great service to him in learning the different processes of mezzotinto engraving, and he advanced very rapidly in his new art, to the great satisfaction of his master, with whom he became a favourite pupil, and eventually a very efficient assistant. One day—in 1817, I think, but am not sure about the date—a young man, dressed in a coat with a fur collar, and the many capes in favour with the youth of that period —a handsome, gipsy-like fellow — called upon Reynolds, and was shown into the engraving-room. After the usual greetings, Reynolds said, 'Now, you must let me have your likeness. I have a lad here who will take you in no time.' 'Well,' said the young man, 'if he is as rapid as that,' or something like it, 'he may try his hand; but five-and-twenty minutes are about all I can give him.' 'Sit down there, then,' said Reynolds. 'Now, Cousins, my boy, do your best.' In less than half an hour the drawing was made from the features, but the hair was still unfinished; except that, the likeness was perfect. 'Give him five minutes more for the hair.' 'Five minutes, and no more,' said the sitter, taking out his watch. The hair was done, and the gipsy-like-looking man shook hands with the boy, patted him upon the head, and went away. 'Well done, Cousins, my boy. Now, do you know who it was you have been drawing?' 'No, sir.' 'That young fellow was Edmund Kean, who took the town by storm in Shylock the other night.' And,"

concluded Egg, "the piece of linen affixed to the drawing was torn from the breast of Kean's shirt by himself in one of his storms of passion in Sir Giles Overreach; and the lad Cousins is the well-known engraver and Academician." The pencil inscription had suffered by time, and become so faint as to be almost illegible; but a little trouble enabled the reader to decipher the following: "This is a piece of the shirt worn by Kean when he acted Sir Giles Overreach, which he tore away from his breast in the last scene."

The foregoing details give but a faint idea of one of the never-to-be-forgotten evenings at Ivy Cottage. Many were the good stories told by Mulready of his early struggles with fortune and with man; for he was a bruiser in his young days, and always took great interest in street-fights when opponents were equally matched. I saw him one day with an intense expression of interest on his face, looking from the street into a small alley which ran at right angles with it; and when I reached him, I saw the cause of his interest in the form of two boys who were pummelling one another, displaying what he called true British pluck.

Ivy Cottage has gone; and of nearly all the bright spirits that were gathered round Egg's table it must be said, alas! that their places know them no more.

Note.—Should the above meet the eyes of the possessor of the Kean portrait, I should be grateful for a sight of it.

CHAPTER XII.

CHARLES DICKENS.

A VERY apt answer was once—and perhaps oftener—given by Tom Taylor to an autograph-hunter; it was to something like the following effect:

"SIR,

"That anybody can be found with a disposition to collect autographs has always been a matter of lively surprise to me; but that anyone can want mine is still more astonishing.

"Yours truly,

"TOM TAYLOR."

That remarkable individual the autograph-collector exists, however, as anyone with ever so small an amount of celebrity knows to his cost, if stamped envelopes are not enclosed for replies; and what is strange is, the signatures have a money value. I once saw one of my own advertised for sale for two shillings; it is true that what was described as "a humorous letter" was attached to it. On second thoughts, I don't think I have given any proof of value; for I doubt if a buyer was found for that

specimen of my penmanship. Any way, autograph-hunting is a harmless phase of insanity; and I always gratify it, even if a reply is not prepaid, if the request is made in terms sufficiently appreciative of what the applicant calls my "genius." Latterly the demand has greatly increased, without a preponderating increase in postage-stamps; and I hereby advertise all and sundry, that the rest of their lives will be made unhappy by my neglect of their applications, unless a stamped envelope is sent for a reply. Creswick's method of dealing with what he called "the autograph pest" was simple; for he told me that he never replied to it, and always pocketed the stamps.

I don't know the value of Dickens's simple signature; but I have heard of fabulous sums being paid for his letters. What I do know is that I possess several of Dickens's letters, which no money would buy. Here follows one from Dickens. For explanation, I must refer my reader to my chapter headed "Landseer," in *re* "Moray Minstrelsy":

"57, Gloster Place,
"Hyde Park Gardens,
"Wednesday, April 13, 1864.

"My dear Frith,

"That Van Amburgh of Trafalgar Square has never told me what the day is; nor do you in your note tell me. Pray enlighten me on this indispensable head. If I am disengaged, I shall be delighted to dine with you.

"Faithfully yours,
"Charles Dickens."

I suppose I must have replied immediately, naming the evening for our musical meeting at Moray Lodge; for I find the next note is of the same date as the first:

"57, Gloster Place,
"Hyde Park Gardens,
"Wednesday, April 13, 1864.

"MY DEAR FRITH,

"What a fellow that Edwin Landseer is! He never gave me a hint of the day; said he didn't know it, when he described those evenings to me. Said he would look at his list, and tell me about it—never has told me anything more; and here am I, on Saturday, the 23rd, going out of town with Browning and Wilkie Collins to keep Shakespeare's birthday in peace and quiet. Was there ever such a fellow?

"Ever faithfully,
"CHARLES DICKENS."

For the information of the rising generation, I may say in explanation that Van Amburgh was a famous lion-tamer of five-and-twenty years ago, and the *sobriquet*, as applied to Landseer, was in allusion to the lions in Trafalgar Square, which, as Dickens said, the painter-sculptor had "subdued by his genius." In the belief that the most trifling specimen of original writing of such a man is interesting, I subjoin the following:

"Gad's Hill Place,
"Higham, by Rochester,
"Kent,
"Saturday, July 12, 1868.

"MY DEAR FRITH,

"Cartwright has duly let me know that you purpose to redeem your promise to come and see us here on Saturday, the 26th. This is merely to let *you* know (though unnecessary, I hope) that you shall be heartily welcomed.

"Faithfully yours,
"CHARLES DICKENS."

The Cartwright named above is the celebrated dentist, who is also celebrated as one of the best and kindest of men. If he should see these lines, I ask him to recall a fearfully long walk, which Dickens called "a stroll," taken by us on the Sunday following our arrival at Gad's Hill. I shall never forget it, or the night I passed—without once closing my eyes in sleep—after it. Dickens was a great pedestrian; his "strolling" was at the rate of, perhaps, a little under four miles an hour: he was used to the pace; I was not, and suffered accordingly.

I suppose most readers of popular fiction form an idea—erroneous sometimes, no doubt—of the author's private character. In Dickens's writings, sympathy with the suffering is in such overwhelming evidence, that it would be strange indeed if the mainspring were not to be found in the writer's own nature, and it would also be strange if attempts were not made

to take advantage of such evident kindness of heart in furtherance of unworthy objects. Dickens has told of some of those attacks upon his heart and purse in print, and with the delightful humour peculiar to him; but he has not told—because it was not for him to tell—of any of the instances in which he has stretched out a helping hand to real distress. I venture to present my readers with a single illustration, in which Dickens and I "went partners," as we used to say at school, and appropriately, as those benefited were the wife and children of an artist. In the letter which follows, I have only suppressed names:

"Office of *All the Year Round*,
"26, Wellington Street,
"Strand,
"Monday, Nov. 16, 1868.

"My dear Frith,

"Thus the case stands: if anybody sends money to Mrs. ——, I know no more of it; neither does anybody else. But if anybody sends money for the family's benefit to the —— fund at ——, I can answer for the moneys being forthcoming, simply because I have made the account payable to my draft only. Of course I have done this as a temporary measure, and I have from the first taken it for granted that you and the third gentleman, whose name I forget (but it was attached to the prospectus with our names), will accept the administration of the money with me, or with any others whom we may join with us. There is the account open at ——,

and Mrs. —— has no power over it; consequently, the object of the subscribers cannot be abused.

"Come early in January, and see a certain friend of yours do the murder from 'Oliver Twist.' It is horribly like, I am afraid! I have a vague sensation of being '*wanted*' as I walk about the streets.

"Faithfully yours ever,

"CHARLES DICKENS."

For some reason the murder was postponed, or I failed to become an accomplice, as I find by the following—the greater part of which it is unnecessary to reproduce, as it relates to the case beforementioned.

"26, Wellington Street,
"Strand,
"Tuesday, Jan. 20, 1869.

"MY DEAR FRITH,

"I do not commit the murder again in London till Tuesday, the 3rd of March. Before we had tried its effect upon the public, the bills were issued for the present course, and we thought it would be a breach of faith to alter them, though urgently required.

* * * * *

"I have not read 'The Chimes' for two years. I am afraid it is a little dismal, but have shortened and brightened it as much as possible.

"I hope you will come and see the murder done.

"Ever faithfully,

"My dear Frith,

"CHARLES DICKENS."

My justification for this final letter may be my belief, expressed already, that the signature at the foot makes it welcome. The following note should have appeared in my former volume, when the subject upon which it treats—Dickens's portrait—was upon the tapis. This is a proof, where none was wanted, of my irregularity :

"Tavistock House,
"Tavistock Square,
"Friday, Feb. 11, 1859.

"My dear Frith,

"I am sure you know that I would not postpone our sitting to-day if I were not positively compelled to do so, but I *am*.

"Shall I come on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, or Saturday, at half-past one? Send me an appointment, and I will keep it.

"Ever penitently,
"Charles Dickens."

Forgive this violation of literary law, dear reader, and lend me your ears, or rather your eyes, for what follows.

Before Dickens's last visit to America, a banquet took place in his honour. It was very numerously attended, the chair being filled by the late Lord Lytton. The night before the dinner, a party of friends of Dickens met and dined at Wilkie Collins's, our object being to wish Dickens a quiet god-speed. The great writer was in great spirits. I think we were none of us in evening dress, for Dickens wore

one of the large cravats which had not then gone out of fashion, and in that cravat was a most wonderful pin, large in size, strange in form, an object of inevitable attraction. Seeing that the jewel drew everybody's attention, Dickens said, "I hope you all like my pin; it is uncommon, I think. It is hardly too much to say, I hope, that there is no such pin as this in America. I have invested in it for the whole and sole purpose of pleasing my friends over the water, and I hope you all think I shall succeed."

Dickens's success was enormous, as everybody knows; but how far the pin contributed to it will, perhaps, never be known.

It was just at this time that the engraving from my picture of the "Railway Station" was published. Photography is not an unmixed blessing, for it has furnished dishonest people with a ready method of reproducing engravings in defiance of the law of copyright. To protect the print of the "Railway Station," the proprietor had affixed notices in prominent places in London containing only these words,

"THE 'RAILWAY STATION' IS COPYRIGHT."

"Do you know, Frith," said Dickens, "the streets of London are unpleasant enough without that warning voice of yours. The sight of that 'Railway-Station' threat struck terror into me this morning. I hurried in a guilty way past it, and didn't feel safe till I had left it a street or two behind me."

In concluding this Dickens chapter I may permit

myself to express the great pleasure I have experienced from letters received from the family of my never-to-be-forgotten friend after the publication of my previous volumes. They gave me proof that I had been successful in showing what I really felt—love for the man, and admiration of his genius. I knew the tender ground on which I was treading—holy ground, indeed, to Dickens's children—and I was thankful to find I had avoided pitfalls.

CHAPTER XIII.

SIR EDWIN LANDSEER.

Visitors to the Houses of Parliament may remember the various frescoes and water-glass paintings that adorn, and in some instances disfigure, those buildings. The best of them, in my opinion, scarcely prove that the genius of English art shines in historical effort. Amongst the most successful are two noble works by Maclise: "The Death of Nelson," and "The Meeting of Wellington and Blucher after the Battle of Waterloo." In these pictures may be seen the prodigality of imagination, the marvellous rendering of detail to the destruction of breadth, and the want of character which the neglect of direct imitation of nature is sure to produce. Still, invention of a certain kind—together with a facility of drawing and grouping masses of figures—is truly astonishing.

The "Wellington and Blucher" was completed just thirty years ago, when, though I had outlived much of my youthful admiration for Maclise, I had enough left, in common with many of my brother-artists, to

make me welcome with enthusiasm that wonderful work. I well remember the day when, in reply to Maclise's invitation, John Phillip, Egg—I, and some others whose names I forget—went to Westminster to see the "Wellington" in its completed state. I was painting "Claude Duval" at the time, and how trifling and trumpery it seemed to me in a mental comparison with the Maclise! We overwhelmed the painter with genuine praise, and as we walked home Phillip said:

"I shall go and put the dashed thing I am doing on the fire;" and I don't think there was one of the party who did not find himself in a similar state of mind.

"We didn't say half enough to him about it," said Egg. "Let us send him a congratulatory address —a round-robin, or something."

This suggestion was eagerly discussed. I think it was I who proposed to supplement the address with a solid mark of our appreciation in the form of a gift of some kind; but what was the gift to be? Anything costly was unnecessary, and out of harmony with the pockets of most of us, and we finally determined upon a silver port-crayon or pencil-case, I forget which—of course, of elaborate workmanship—which should accompany our expressions of admiration and congratulation. Then came the question of how many were to be asked to join in our little testimonial. I volunteered to ask Landseer, and here is his reply:

No date.

"DEAR FRITH,

"I have been away and unwell, which partly accounts for my apparent want of attention to your note, telling of the affectionate intentions towards our justly-valued friend, D. Maclise. I am inclined to think the committee, or whoever suggested this testimonial to D. M., would do well to pause and reconsider the matter. I think the scheme out of proportion with the *gigantic achievement*, and that it comes at the *wrong time*. You may sincerely believe in my respect and admiration for his great genius, and that I as faithfully appreciate the man, who is the best fellow upon earth. Could you call here any time to-morrow before one o'clock?

"Yours sincerely (in haste),

"E. LANDSEER."

Looking back over the years that have passed since our, comparatively, youthful enthusiasm was aroused by the production of these gigantic pictures —for gigantic they are in size as well as merit—the presentation of a silver pencil-case to their author seems to border on the ridiculous. But if the spirit that influenced us is taken into account—as I think it ought to be—the inadequacy of our offering, though "out of proportion with the gigantic achievement," was somewhat overestimated and misunderstood by Landseer. Not so by Maclise, who received it, with its accompanying expressions of admiration, in a true spirit of appreciation. Since Maclise's death,

I have tried in vain to learn what has become of our little gift. Should these lines meet the eye of its possessor, I hope he will allow me a sight of it for the sake of "auld lang syne."

The publication of my autobiography has brought me, literally, hundreds of letters. Amongst them is one from an officer alluding to Maclise, from which I extract—with thanks to that gentleman—the following. Says the writer: "He [Maclise] had an eccentric brother, an officer in the army, not above the ordinary run of us. One day, on being asked by an officer of an infantry regiment if he was any relation to '*the* Maclise,' he replied, 'I am THE Maclise, and Dan is me brother.' The Maclises were Irishmen."

Though, as I have said already, it is difficult and dangerous to prognosticate from early efforts in art as to the future of an aspirant, still, there are instances where the signs of genius are so unmistakable as to make an adviser's duty pleasant and palpable. Edwin Landseer and Millais are the most notable examples that occur to me. Mr. Sheepshanks showed me drawings of animals done by Landseer when quite a child that were perfectly astonishing, and from which there could be no doubt that an artistic career had been plainly indicated by nature. Before he was twenty-one, Landseer had astonished the world. The brothers Landseer had great advantages arising from their surroundings. John Landseer, their father, was so proficient as an engraver as to be elected an Associate of the Royal Academy—an Associate only;

for engravers at that time were not eligible for the higher honour. He was also an art critic, and an eloquent writer on matters of art.

Readers of Haydon's life will remember that John Landseer brought his "boys" to become pupils of that unfortunate man. They all studied under him; and I have often heard Edwin say that he owed no little of his success to Haydon's insisting upon dissection of animals as a vital element in the practice of an animal painter, just as he maintained that a thorough knowledge of the human form could not be acquired without the information that dissection only could give. The elder Landseer's position in the world of art and letters brought him and his sons into contact with eminent persons. Edwin's genius elevated him into the society of what is commonly called "the great," to a degree equalled only perhaps by Sir Joshua Reynolds. I venture to think that the advantage of the connection was entirely on the side of "the great," whose scrap-books and albums were enriched by gratuitous sketches, and whose pockets were often replenished by the profits obtained on the sale of pictures for which absurdly small prices had been paid.

Somehow or other I became possessed of some fragments of a copy of an old number of the *Examiner* newspaper; and one day when Landseer had dined with me, I lent him the "scraps" to show to his brother. They were returned to me in the letter that follows:

"Aug. 20, 1867.

"DEAR FRITH,

"You entrusted me with the enclosed the last time I had the pleasure of seeing you. The *Examiner* always recalls my boyhood—Leigh Hunt, J. Hunt, etc., my father's friends, who used often to drop in on Sundays to dine. They all talked pearls and diamonds, and astonished us boys—T. L. and C. L. at that end of life, or the commencement of a career, being older and wiser than their younger brother, E. L. My first picture of any importance was entitled 'Fighting Dogs Getting Wind,' exhibited at Spring Gardens the same year that Haydon's 'Judgment of Solomon' made the greatest sensation in that room. My picture was bought from my father by Sir George Beaumont. I was then just born into teens. My father often indulged his good taste and pluck in writing on art in the paper of which you possess some scraps.

"I suppose you are thinking of leaving London?

"I shall not be able to flit for weeks.

"Yours sincerely,

"E. LANDSEER."

"Just born into teens!" Think of that, young Michael Angelo, when you protest that your grandmother was quite in the right when she said if Claude did not begin to paint till he was thirty (a fiction), you need not risk your precious health by premature hard work!

I possess a great number of letters by Landseer;

but as most of them are either acceptances of invitations or invitations themselves, they possess no interest beyond the autographic.

The following may appear, as it presents an example—common enough, no doubt—of the interest taken by the Queen in art and artists. My dear old friend Phillip, R.A., had just died, leaving many sketches and unfinished pictures, when I received the accompanying letter :

"March 10, 1867.

"DEAR FRITH,

"Since I saw you and your great work, I have been very unwell, and bothered by dark weather.

"Can you give me any positive information relative to the picture-property left by your poor friend Phillip, as I wish to answer her Majesty's inquiries? She is desirous to obtain some of his studies, and would also like a picture. Possibly I could see Phillip's things! Perhaps you would go with me some day about five, as it is now light at that hour. The sooner I can reply to the Queen's question, the better.

"Would you consent to dirty a plate here on Wednesday next at a quarter after seven o'clock? No party; no dressing. I shall be pleased to receive your short 'Yes.'

"Sincerely yours,

"E. LANDSEER."

Landseer and I went to see the remaining works

of Phillip, with which he was delighted; but whether his visit brought about a purchase by the Queen I never knew.

I will conclude my Landseer chapter by one more letter; and to introduce it, I must allude to the many delightful evenings I have passed, first in Jermyn Street, listening to the Jermyn Band; then in Moray Lodge, where the Moray Minstrels pierced dense clouds of tobacco-smoke with glees, part-songs, solos, etc.—music, in fact, in many forms. The presiding genius, and most hospitable of hosts, was Mr. Arthur Lewis. Landseer had dined with me, and we went together to Moray Lodge. The famous painter's delight in music was very great. He had enjoyed the variety put before him with intense relish, when a gentleman, who shall be nameless, sat down to the piano and played—no doubt, very beautifully; but his performance to my uninstructed ear sounded too much like that produced by a musical box. Landseer was at my elbow, and in perilous proximity to the player, when he exclaimed, "John Parry would lick his head off with his little finger!" I think and hope the performer did not hear this little compliment, which Landseer assured me slipped through his lips before he had time to stop it—an instance of thinking aloud, in fact.

It was on another occasion, as, accompanied by a friend to whom Nature has been peculiarly bountiful in the appetite she has given him, I was leaving Moray Lodge a little after twelve at night, that we

met an eccentric genius, who, I am told, is as witty as a man as he is incomprehensible as an artist. This gentleman, having evidently been passing his evening elsewhere, made his very late appearance as we were leaving; my friend opened the door to him, in fact. With a knowledge of my friend's unusual power of disposing of food, and his great enjoyment of it, the moment the laggard visitor caught sight of him, he exclaimed, "Oh, then I see supper's over!"

But to return to Landseer. The Moray Minstrels had announced their last performance, when I received the following in reply to an invitation to dinner:

"April 11, 1864.

"DEAR FRITH,

"A few days ago I met Dickens at dinner, and gave him a rich account of Lewis's parties. He consented to go the *last night*. I have an idea that I proposed his dining with me, and afterwards going to Camden Hill. Till this matter is understood, I cannot take advantage of your kind proposal, unless you ask Dickens to dine with you. If you make such an arrangement, I shall be most happy to accept your friendly invitation. I am glad you like my Bears.

"Yours truly,

"E. L."

I wrote to Dickens, and endeavoured to arrange matters; but a mistake had been made by Landseer

according to Dickens, and by Dickens according to Landseer, with the result of a general disappointment. I believe the great writer never heard the Moray Minstrels. The explanation of miscarriage, such as it is, appears in the Dickens correspondence, where the blame is thrown upon "the Van Amburgh of Trafalgar Square." The picture of the "Bears" alluded to in Landseer's letter was engraved by his brother, and familiar to everyone under the title of "Man proposes, and God disposes."

With a little anecdote, in which a lesson of modesty may be read between the lines, I will close my Landseer chapter.

The picture called "Braemar," a large work, the property of Mr. Bolckow, was sold at Christie's the other day for upwards of £5,000. It was painted for the banqueting-room at Preston Hall, the seat of Mr. Betts. A large party of artists accompanied the painter to see his work in its place upon the walls. The picture looked splendid, and the author was assured of it by a unanimous chorus of applause. "Ah!" said Landseer; "if you could see the picture with my eyes, you wouldn't say so many pretty things about it."

To illustrate the change in the estimated value of Landseer's work, I may add that the sum paid by Mr. Betts for "Braemar" was £800, the price asked being £600. The extra money expressed in a sense Mr. Betts's approval of the work.

I wish I could find words strong enough to express my love and admiration for Landseer as a

man and an artist. I owe him warmest thanks for many, many hours of delightful social intercourse, and sincere gratitude for his warm-hearted and generous encouragement in all my artistic doings. Never did there live a man to whom Shakespeare's words could be more fittingly applied, "Take him for all in all, we ne'er shall look upon his like again." Vale, dear friend! vale! may we meet in the Elysian Fields!

CHAPTER XIV.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA.

I AM vain enough to think that if my reputation as an artist, such as it is, had "come into blow"—to use the poetical language of Miss Squeers—ten years or so before it burst upon the world, I might have been invited by Lady Blessington to Gore House, where I should have met "congenial spirits;" and when I inform my reader that those spirits included nearly every celebrity—home and foreign—with whom London society was familiar, the amount of conceit implied by my assumed equality would be difficult for him to gauge. Tom Moore sang and wept there, Sir Walter Scott was a frequent guest—I have been told—with lesser stars too numerous to count. I should have missed the society of ladies, I believe, and, great as that deprivation always is to me, I could have borne it under the circumstances. I may boast that Lady Blessington once made a faint approach to me through Charles Heath, the engraver; by that gentleman's advice, no doubt. Heath had seen some of "the beauties of Moore," several of which owed their existence to me; there

were some pretty heads amongst them, in Heath's opinion sufficiently "lovely" to justify his proposing me as one of the illustrators of "The Book of Beauty," then published under the editorship of Lady Blessington.

"Here," said Heath, in the squeakiest voice I ever heard—"here is a lovely story by my lady—'Ianthe of Nismes.' Read it—you will be delighted. Just do me an 'Ianthe,' now—nice dark beauty, long ringlets and that, you know. Let's see—fifteen pound, isn't it? I'll engrave it myself."

I read "Ianthe of Nismes;" but when I tried to imagine the lady my mind was a blank; the story was the vilest nonsense ever penned, and I don't believe my lady had written a word of it.

"Well," said I to Heath, "I can't manage an 'Ianthe;' but I will do something else for you."

That something may be found by anybody foolish enough to look for it in "The Book of Beauty" for the year 1842 or thereabouts, and it is called "The Bride."

I do not remember the date of the Gore House catastrophe, but I well recollect the sorrow—in a mild form—that I felt when I heard that "The Book of Beauty" was no more, and that the editor, with her friend Count d'Orsay, had exhausted the patience of their creditors at last. Gore House and its contents were thrown open to public inspection previous to the auctioneer's operations, when the female element made up for its enforced absence by crowding each room to suffocation. My first ap-

pearance at Gore House was on one of those public days. In a kind of boudoir there was a piece of sculpture which seemed greatly to interest some ladies, who formed a group round it, which—judging from its appearance—was composed of duchesses and marchionesses, and the like. On a cushion lay some marble hands of lovely form, exquisitely sculptured.

"Oh yes," said one of the aristocratic group to the rest; "they are her own hands. I know the man who modelled them. He said he never saw more perfect hands, both in form and colour."

I have the expression of some of those faces before me at this moment. Curiosity seemed to me the liveliest and the most prevailing, though now and again a haughty dame, after examining some startling evidence of extravagance, would assume an air which, being interpreted, said, "And this is the end of a wicked career. Thank goodness I have lived to see it!"

Before Gore House gave way to the present Albert Hall, and its gardens became the camping-ground of International Exhibitions, it was taken by Alexis Soyer, the great cook, who christened it "The Symposium," I think. Whether that imposing word means an eating-house or not, I do not possess Latin enough to say; but a restaurant Gore House became during the Crystal Palace Exhibition in Hyde Park in 1851. I restored myself in it several times. It was turned into a gorgeous place; the walls were covered with admirably painted scenes. The effect conveyed to my mind by the aspect of the saloons

was one of surprise mixed with a strong sensation of the grotesque ; it was as if some clever scene-painter had been turned into the rooms, passages, and staircases, and told to do just what he pleased with all of them. Serpents abounded, but at this lapse of time I cannot speak positively to the part they played. The whole thing was original, bizarre, and magnificent.

"Who," said I to a waiter, "was the artist who decorated the Symposium ?"

"Mr. Sala, sir—Mr. George Augustus Sala."

This was a real surprise to me. I had not then the honour and pleasure of Mr. Sala's acquaintance, but I knew him, as everybody else did, as a writer, and I said as much to the waiter.

"Oh yes, sir," said the man, "Mr. Sala is a great artist as well ; he is not a R.A. yet, but it's expected he soon will be."

Since then I have seen sufficient evidence of Mr. Sala's prowess as a sketcher and draughtsman to convince me that if he had devoted himself to art instead of to literature he would have scored a success equal to that he has secured in letters. Where is the word-painter that can excel my friend ? If with words, why not with colours ? By Mr. Sala's kindness I am permitted to publish some of his letters. In one of them especially my reader, if he possess ordinary imagination, will realize for himself a picture from Sterne, word-painted to perfection. I regret now that I did not try to put the scene into a permanent form ; but I had gone so much to the pages of Sterne for inspiration that I shrank from going to

that source again. "I am ignorant of the art in which you are said to excel," said poor Goldsmith to Sir Joshua Reynolds. In like manner I may say that I have no knowledge of the art of literary composition; but, in his capacity as an art-critic, I think I can judge of Mr. Sala, and I maintain that a real knowledge of the subject on which he writes is apparent in his criticisms. And what a fund of varied knowledge is displayed in the multitudinous subjects that come under his hands as a journalist! I have heard exclamations of astonishment, in which I have fully shared, at the variety and extent of the information on all kinds of subjects that this distinguished journalist possesses. Mr. Sala is not only a journalist, as everybody knows, but a first-rate public speaker and an accomplished author, friend and collaborateur of Charles Dickens, in whose periodicals Mr. Sala has published some of his best work.

I will only detain my reader from Mr. Sala's letters to add that in private life he is as charming a companion as such a writer might be expected to be. With the tenderest heart in the world, I am sure he never wrote a severe line about any person or thing unless both thing and person richly deserved it.

"Dessin's Hotel,
"Calais,
"April 11, 1866.

"My dear Mr. Frith,

"I send this enclosed in a letter to Shirley Brooks, as in a multiplicity of 'streets of the world'

I have forgotten your own particular one. I hope you have not quite lost sight of the 'Waterloo Triptich,' the 'Duchess of Richmond's Ball,' the 'Gathering in Hot Haste in the Grand Place, Brussels,' and the 'Death of the Duke of Brunswick at Quatre Bras.' But there has occurred to me lately a better subject —a modern subject, more varied, more popular, and more engravable. I came down a thousand miles out of the South of Spain to meet Mrs. Sala (who sends her compliments to Mrs. Frith), and, lingering at Calais, this scheme for a brace of pictures occurred to me: 'Calais in 1766—Yorick and the Désobligeante;' 'Calais in 1866—The Day Mail just in.'

"No. 1. It is just one hundred years since Sterne began the 'Sentimental Journey' at Dessin's Hotel, Calais. Read the first three chapters, and you will see at once my picture. I want the old-fashioned courtyard at Dessin's, the crowd of carriages, *désobligeantes*, *calèches*, *chaises de post* for sale or hire; the désobligeante, the pretty lady, Sterne, the Franciscan monk whom he has just repulsed, the little *débonnaire* French captain; a kitchen in the distance, and the white-aproned cook busy among his pots and pans; a fat priest talking to a pretty chambermaid; landlady scolding from a window; man fiddling at another; burly English squire and family just arrived, wrangling with a postilion; poor Scotch refugee getting a basin of soup from Madame Dessin; and as a *bonne bouche* give us Sterne's starling in a cage, and on the *porte-cochère* the ass that ate the macaroons. He saw the first at

Paris, and the second at Lyons ; but you can apologize in the catalogue for having foreshadowed them at Calais. Sterne's gaunt black figure will come out capitally in the old courtyard. I know no one but yourself who could paint all those varied types : the lumbering old vehicles—no horses, mind—the pretty lady, the monk, the grisette, the postilion, the cook, and the pigtailed French officer.

"Mem.—You must come to Calais for the courtyard ; but remember that the present Dessin's Hotel is the *ci-devant* Hôtel Quillar. The old original one is now a museum ; but you can easily find all the traces of Sterne, and Monsieur Dessin at Quillar's will give you every information.

"Now for No. 2, 'Calais in 1866.'

"You have only to take the quay at the fort—not the pier. It is half-past one p.m. The Dover packet is just in. Passengers landing—people who have been ill, people who have not ; whiskered couriers ; Italian prima donna ; mamma and papa come to see their children at school ; children waiting for them ; Italian organ-grinders ; Russian swell in his fur great-coat ; English swells ; an English jockey going to win the French Derby—all the wonderful people you see on board the mail-steamer. On shore the gendarmes, the Custom-house officers, the hotel-touters, and the seedy English exiles who can't go to England. Don't put me among the number. Stop, we meet an English swell, very haughty, going to fill some embassy abroad, with his family, the lady's-maid, and two superb flunkies, who

have been very sick. In the foreground you have a lot of anchors and marine-stores, and a huge crane; a little to the left the omnibus, and the post-office *fourgon* waiting for the mail; to the right, in the distance, the railway terminus; in the extreme distance the gate of the fortifications. About the steamer more boats and masts. You see that in this you get as varied a drama as in the 'Seaside' and 'Railway Station' pictures, and in association with the 'Sentimental Journey' you tell a plain and pleasant story. I took stock of the whole scene yesterday, and it seems to me immensely paintable. The idea, if you accept it, is yours, *free, gratis, and for nothing.* My reward, if the pictures are painted, shall be a sketch from your hand of somebody's head. Don't forget a Queen's messenger landing *first*—a military swell in mufti, with a bag labelled, 'Her Majesty's Foreign Office'—don't forget an English governess in mourning, and that all the Frenchmen have been woefully ill.

"In about ten days from this we shall be in Vienna. Please drop me a line, 'Poste Restante, Vienna, Austria,' to tell me what you think of my notion. I have not mentioned this subject to a living soul. Please to keep your own counsel upon it, especially as regards one whom I disdain to name, but who might earn elevenpence halfpenny of copy from it for his paper.

"I send you a leaf from my sketch-book. I have taken to niggling in pen and ink, after many years' abandonment of an art in which it would have been

an impossibility for me ever to excel, for I have but one serviceable eye. And you will see that none of my figures stand well, and that wherever symmetry is needed they are askew. But I have wiled away many solitary hours in Spain over these fancies.

"Don't forget, Poste Restante, Vienna, in about ten days. I met a friend of yours and mine; he is a wonderful swell. My homage to Mrs. Frith.

"Yours truly,

"G. A. Sala."

I present my reader with another and scarcely less admirable specimen of word-painting by Mr. Sala:

"94, Sloane Street,
"Knightsbridge, S.W.,
"Monday, Nov. 18.

"My dear Mr. Frith,

"I want to tell you about a subject for your pencil, which I think would suit you admirably, only, as on previous occasions, I may be wrong.

"Of course you know the beautiful story of Mrs. Montagu, and the son who was stolen as an infant, and discovered at last lying on a bed in her house, whither he had come to sweep the chimney. Now, do you see that grandly-furnished old seventeenth-century bedchamber, rich carpet and marble mantel-piece, fire-dogs and Indian screen, heavy old four-post bed, with plumes to the tester, little chimney-sweep lying in a peaceful slumber, his grimy clothes and hair besmirching the silvery counterpane and frilled pillow, soot-bag and brushes lying about? A

ray of sunlight comes and touches the little fellow. The mother stands over him, hands clasped, eyes streaming, half recognising him, but not quite sure; but an old house-dog knows the child at once, and is on his hind-legs fumbling at his toes. The lady has given a scream, and through the open door you see servants. Portrait of the little boy—say by Gainsborough—by side of bed. Title, 'Found at Last.'

"Tell me what you say of this. If it has been done before, I shall seem a chimney-sweep myself.

"Mrs. Montagu's story is alluded to in one of Charles Lamb's essays; you know that she founded an annual festival for chimney-sweeps in Smithfield.

"I think I previously sent you that notice from 'Pepys' Diary,' of Pepys hearing Knip her part in the theatre dressing-room, where there was Nell Gwynne 'all unready,' and cursing because there were so few in the pit.

"Faithfully yours,

"GEORGE AUG. SALA."

Why I have painted subjects of inferior interest to those proposed by my friend I cannot tell; partly, I suppose, from stupidity, and partly from the objection common to my fraternity against all *proposed* subjects. I can only now express unavailing regret.

The two following notes were in reply to requests made for sittings, etc., connected with my picture of "The Private View":

"46, Mecklenburgh Square, W.C.,
"Thursday, Dec. 8, 1881.

"My dear Frith,

"I shall be delighted. My only leisure day is Saturday, any time before one a.m.; or any Saturday you like to give me notice of, as I sometimes bolt down to Brighton on that day of rest.

"I send you a photo, which Mrs. Sala declares to be the best (it is the last but one) that has been taken of me. Don't forget the white waistcoat. I have worn one every day for five-and-twenty years, so that an old washerwoman said to me once: 'How I should like to be your washerwoman!' By this time she would have taken more than two hundred pounds for washing my vests alone. I am old and poor, but I don't regret the outlay on my laundry. You can't very well murder when you have a white waistcoat on. By donning that snowy garment you have, in a manner, given hostages to respectability.

"Faithfully always,
"G. A. Sala."

"46, Mecklenburgh Square, W.C.,
"Monday, March 6, 1882.

"My dear W. P. F.,

"I write a line just to say that (unintentionally, perhaps) you have paid me the finest compliment that I ever received in the course of a long and laborious career. You sent for my 'Private View' coats, etc. Never before, my dear Frith, has it been assumed that an English man of letters possessed a

second coat, to say nothing of a change of waistcoats and ties.

"Two circumstances only temper the cup of my enjoyment. You did not send for my trousers. *They were ready*, sir! And a fiendish friend has just whispered to me that, perhaps, you thought I could lie in bed till my clothes came back.

"Sincerely, the object of this billet is to ask you if the Baroness Burdett-Coutts did come to see the picture, and if she consented to sit. I have not seen her since I very pressingly asked her to go.

"Faithfully yours always,

"G. A. Sala."

CHAPTER XV.

JOHN LEECH.

I REGRET to say that I possess very few of Leech's letters ; that remarkable genius suffered from a very common failing—that of a detestation of letter-writing. I have often heard him express his dislike, and plead it in excuse for some lapse of ordinary courtesy, easily forgiven in such a man. An incident occurred however, which had a ludicrous, and might have had a serious, issue ; and, as Leech was the chief cause of it, he could not escape the necessity for writing the letter which follows.

To make the matter clear, I must premise that a great many years ago I was in the habit of taking horse exercise. I am a tolerable horseman, but it has been my fate to be connected with animals of such spirit as to cause the power of keeping my seat to be a matter of great difficulty. Westbourne Grove, with its noisy traffic, its frequent cabs, omnibuses, and carts, was never looked upon with favour by any of the horses with which I have been acquainted. Enforced leisure on the part of a horse of volatile disposition is productive—according to my experience—of a liveli-

ness of action which makes progress in a crowded thoroughfare both difficult and dangerous. Regular exercise is necessary for horse as well as man; unfortunately, the exigences of my profession, to say nothing of the weather, made regular exercise for my horse—or, rather, horses, for I frequently changed them—impossible.

A thoroughbred mare, the heroine of my first and last day's hunting (described in my previous reminiscences), having enjoyed a rather long rest—after misconducting herself amongst the vehicles in Westbourne Grove—seemed to have made up her mind to get rid of me just opposite a fishmonger's shop in the Bishop's Road. The fishmonger's wife had a taste for the arts, and she had a respect for me in consequence; besides, I was a good customer.

My mare reared, plunged, and pirouetted, declining to advance or recede, till a vigorous cut of my whip sent her on at a pace which a policeman would have objected to if he had witnessed it. The fishmonger's wife afterwards told Mrs. Frith that she knew that horse would be the death of me some day. She had seen me ride past the shop often, and never without feeling her heart sink within her: "And the last time, ma'am, if you will believe me, I was obliged to ask my husband for a little brandy, or I do believe I should have fainted away, for every minute I expected Mr. Frith's neck to be broke before my very face."

I am not brave, and I object to be made uncomfortable; and as it became impossible to ride my

mare without a certain amount of danger, I got rid of her, and asked some of my horsey friends to look out for another Bucephalus for me. Leech soon found one, and sent him to me for inspection. I liked the look of the animal, and the owner gave him an excellent character. He was handsome—that I could see for myself; "he was quiet as a lamb—why, a child might ride him with safety; oh, he wouldn't take notice of omnibuses and such-like things: he was used to 'em—never knowed him to shy at anything; temper perfect; as to age, you have nothing to do but look into his mouth to see that," and so on. The bargain was made, and the new purchase deposited in a livery-stable hard by.

With something like the eagerness of a child with a new toy I mounted my horse for the first time, and took my way towards Hyde Park. Instead of the fidgeting, prancing, half-trotting, half-cantering motion of my thoroughbred, as she went sometimes straight, sometimes sideways, down Westbourne Grove, my new acquisition made his way in a dignified walk, supremely indifferent to anything to the right or left, in front or behind him. "At last," I thought, "I have made a successful purchase. I feel this to be the horse to suit me."

Where shall I ride to?—Harrow—Willesden—where? Why not to Rotten Row? 'tis the height of the season. What so charming as a lady on horseback! I will go and scrutinize closely the lovely creatures I have so often worshipped at a distance. So towards the scene of so much grace and beauty I

directed my steed. We had—to my surprise—a slight difference of opinion at the Park gates; for some horsey reason or other my animal seemed to prefer the Bayswater Road to the Park. I persisted, and, like a well-bred horse, he yielded after a frisk or two; and without any further adventure worth recording, we reached the Row. The weather was everything that could be wished. Elegant ladies on magnificent horses, scarcely less elegant men on equally splendid horses, were there in scores. "Now," said I, "with your permission, my new friend, we will increase our speed a little and follow that bevy of riders."

A trot slid easily into a canter, but before that pace had continued a minute, it was exchanged for a full stop, a sudden arching of the horse's back, and two or three rapid upward jumps, appalling to experience. There was no mistaking my steed's intention for anything but a determination to part company from me.

When I had recovered from my alarm and surprise, I applied my whip vigorously. This produced a kick, which threw me on to the brute's neck, and, as I recovered my seat, he trotted off, gradually broke into a canter, and then as before—no, not as before, it was much worse this time—he stopped short, kicked, jumped, arched his back, threw his head down between his forelegs—in short, behaved in precisely the same way as the buck-jumpers did at the Wild West Exhibition. I am not a Mexican cowboy, so how I saved my life on that eventful

day I know not; for, not content with two miraculous escapes, I ventured upon still another attempt to mix with my fellow-equestrians, bringing upon myself a third and still more desperate attempt upon my life. Then—I confess it with shame—I became thoroughly unnerved—frightened, in short. (A gentleman had been killed in Rotten Row a few days before my appearance there.) *I was not thrown*, as my enemies have declared, but I descended from my saddle, took my buck-jumper by the bridle, and led him away.

I forget the exact cost of that ride—about twenty pounds, I think. I also forget—and no wonder, for 'tis thirty years since—what became of my horse; but of one thing I am quite sure; I never mounted him again, and that I sold him for much less than he cost.

I cannot resist introducing here an equestrian experience of an artist friend—Montague, the landscape painter. Montague was a delicate man. His doctor told him he must have horse exercise. The poor artist, for poor he was in health and pocket, invested fifteen pounds in a dealer-bepraised hackney—not much to look at, but what can you expect for fifteen pounds? The artist enjoyed his first ride, without the peril attending mine; but his pleasure was disturbed a little by the strange breathing of his horse. It was odd, abnormal. He had never heard such breathing before. My artist friend lodged in Greek Street, Soho; his horse was stabled near by. Montague was tired after his ride, and

went early to bed. How long he had been asleep he knew not, when he was awakened by one of the stablemen, who held a lantern.

"Sorry to wake you, sir, but your horse is very bad; he is laying in our stable a-dying, I think. Thought I ought to let you know, as you might like to have a look at him afore——"

My friend partially dressed himself, hurried on his dressing-gown, and accompanied the man to the stable. There lay the fifteen-pound purchase in the agony of death.

"What is that?" said Montague, pointing to what looked like lumps of shot.

"That's gunshot, that is; he has womited such a lot. You see, that's what them dealers gives horses when their wind is wrong—roarers we calls 'em—just to take in such gents as you."

As the stableman uttered these words the horse breathed his last.

"And that ride — only just round Hampstead Heath, Frith—cost me fifteen sovereigns."

Let my reader forgive this interruption, and I will return to John Leech, whose ears soon received intelligence of "the dangers I had passed." The following note was the result:

"6, The Terrace,
"Kensington,
"Sunday.

"My dear Frith,

"I was shocked last night at the Garrick to hear from Elmore that I had nearly killed you

through recommending a horse that had misbehaved himself in the Park. To be sure, I told you that I had been to look at an animal for my little girl, and that it did not suit; and I told you that it might be worth your looking at, as I had heard that it was young, sound, and steady; but if you ride a beast that you know nothing about in Rotten Row, and if that beast has not been out for a week, or probably a fortnight, I must protest against being made answerable for the consequences. I most sincerely hope, however, that you are not hurt, or come to grief in any way.

"Believe me,

"Yours always,

"JOHN LEECH."

In the belief that any letter from Leech, however trifling the subject of it may be, will interest my readers, I add the following:

"32, Brunswick Square,

"Monday, Jan. 22, 1859.

"MY DEAR FRITH,

"On my return to town I find that our weekly *Punch* meeting and dinner is fixed for Tuesday instead of Wednesday, our usual day, in order that we may go to Thackeray's lecture in the evening afterwards. As I am very anxious not to miss one of the series of lectures, will you kindly let me dine with you some other day? I will come to you to-morrow afternoon, and we will have a walk and talk just the same, if you have no objection. Since I

saw you I have been riding about in a railway carriage principally, or I would have written to you before. With our kind regards to Mrs. Frith,

"Believe me always,

"Yours faithfully,

"JOHN LEECH."

Yet another little note, in which allusion is made to that inimitable and kindred genius, John Parry, who so often delighted us and our guests :

"Sunday, 6.30.

"MY DEAR FRITH,

"To my consternation I found, on sitting down to dinner, that I had asked Perceval Leigh to dine with me ; and I had forgotten all about it, like a great fool as I am—and here he is! so that I must perforce postpone the pleasure of our friend Parry's delightful humour. Pray give my best wishes and kind regards to him, and believe me,

"Yours faithfully,

"JOHN LEECH."

I have spoken at some length of my dear old friend John Leech elsewhere. To his qualities as an artist the everlasting interest taken in his works by succeeding generations will abundantly testify. To his friends his premature death was a great sorrow ; and it may be said of him, with as much, or more truth than was said of Garrick, "that his death eclipsed the gaiety of nations."

Leech was married, and had two children—a boy

and a girl. The boy grew to manhood, and was drowned by the capsizing of a boat in Australian waters ; his daughter married a clergyman, and is, I believe and trust, still living.

Mrs. Leech did not long survive her husband. She has now joined him, as we are taught to believe, where the "noises" that so distressed him will be heard no more.

CHAPTER XVI.

SHIRLEY BROOKS.

It was about the year 1856 that I first met Shirley Brooks in society. A dinner at Leech's was the occasion, and I then became aware how well Brooks deserved to be called "good company." He had long been on the staff of *Punch*, under the leadership of Mark Lemon; and nearly every week that paper owed some of its smartest writing to the pen of Shirley Brooks. But it was in conversation, and above all in his letters, that his wit and humour were brilliantly conspicuous. I confess his novels were disappointing to me. I had read one—"Aspen Court," I think; and having, rather hypocritically, given it more praise than I fear it deserved, Brooks said, "Wait till you read the 'Silver Cord,' my boy; *that* will improve your mind, if it is not too far gone for anything wholesome to act upon it."

The "Silver Cord" came, and took its place upon the drawing-room table. Brooks called one day—some time after he had presented the novel—caught sight of his book, took it up, examined it, and, with

an expression I shall never forget, said, as he threw it down, "Not even cut."

The name of Cottle, in which my friend so often addressed me, arose in this wise. A certain Elizabeth Cottle sent to *Punch* a wild document—plentifully interspersed with religious quotations—in which she proved to her own satisfaction that if she had her rights she would be Queen of England. She traced her descent in the clearest way from Henry VIII., who had a lawful wife unknown to history—a Lady Elizabeth Cottle, or Cottal, daughter of a knight of that name who had saved Henry's life at the Battle of Armageddon. An angel appeared on the occasion, and placed upon the knight's head a crown of gold, thereby greatly astonishing all the British army. According to Elizabeth, the heavenly visitor stayed long enough to tell the English monarch that—in return for the important service rendered by the valiant knight—he must immediately take to wife the beautiful daughter of his preserver. The wife in possession was removed by simply taking off her head, and the Lady Cottle became Mrs. Henry; and from that secret marriage Mrs. Elizabeth Cottle undertook to show, in the pages of *Punch*, that she was descended in what she called "a straight line;" offering great numbers of quotations from Holy Writ in proof of her case.

This interesting descendant from a long line of kings lived at Putney, a locality—as she threateningly put it—soon to be exchanged for Buckingham Palace.

The above, to the best of my recollection, is a fair summary of the Cottle manifesto; the original—which Brooks sent me, with an inimitably funny note affecting to believe me to be the author—I regret to say, has been lost.

In spite of my denial of any knowledge of Mrs. or Miss Cottle, I became Cottle in Shirley's eyes; and he frequently addressed me accordingly.

Brooks was a *bon vivant*, but never guilty of the excesses which sometimes disfigure that character. I think he enjoyed dining with me, and I am sure I enjoyed dining with him. It would be too great an effort of memory to recall the names of the celebrated people I have met at Shirley's table. Charles Kingsley and Mark Twain were there the same evening I think—the former with the drawback of a slight stutter, delighting us with his bright talk; and the latter with his quaint humour; Brooks always "holding his own" in that, or any other company.

When I heard the other day of the untimely death of young Shirley Brooks, my first feeling was one of thankfulness that his father was spared the misery of realizing it. If ever father "garnered up his hopes" in his children, Shirley Brooks was the man; and that cruel blow, destroying rare intellectual powers in their first freshness—powers which I am assured quite equalled those of his father—would have fallen with crushing effect on my old friend.

Shirley Brooks had only two sons. I have seen little of them since they were children. In what I

say, therefore, of the intellectual qualities of the younger Shirley, I only echo common report.

No. 7, Pembridge Villas, was the last house at which Brooks dined away from his home. I well remember the night. He looked tired, and seemed out of spirits; his appetite failed, and he left early. I never saw him again. Within a few days, long-seated heart-disease put an end to one of whom it may be said, in very different language to mine, he was "a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy."

I encourage the hope that a perusal of some of the following letters of Shirley Brooks will prove that my estimate of the writer is justified:

THE EPISTLE OF SHEGOG.

CHAPTER I.

Now the word of Cottle came unto me, even me, Shegog, saying, Come, and eat flesh, and drink wine, which maketh glad the heart of man, and impertinent the tongue of woman. Then I took counsel of myself, and said, The man, even Cottle, is a good man, and an affable; moreover, his harem hath found favour in mine eyes, and his child is comely. And I arose and went unto my wife, which came from the island that is beyond the sea, even the western sea, and I said unto her, Lo! And she replied, Is thy servant a cow that she should do this thing? And again I said unto her, Lo! [*l'eau*? W. P. F.] And she answered, saying, It is in the glass jug on the side-

board. And I said unto her the third time, Lo! And she answered, saying, Low, dear boy, who is low? Then did my wrath blaze out like the fire when it consumeth thorns, and I said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. Have I not told thee three times to look at this letter, even this scroll, which is written by the man Cottle, which useth pigments, and maketh the faces of the princes of the people, and the chief lords thereof? Likewise the highway robber, the man Claude Duval, and the little child which showeth her little fat legs to the sea, even the Ramsgate sea. Then the woman which is of the western islands answered, saying, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian; nevertheless, give me the letter. And I spread the letter before the woman.

CHAPTER II.

Now when she had read the letter, which was written in a strange tongue, like unto that of Cerberus, the dog of hell, for it was three tongues, and all of them dam bad. And I said unto her, Cheer up. Art not thou my wife? And she answered, saying, Even so, wus luck; but that is not the matter. Didst thou not say unto them that dwell by Clapham (where, also, the Quakers dwell) that thou wouldst eat flesh and drink wine with them on the Sabbath day, even the fourth Sunday in the season which is called Lent, because it is borrowed from the woman in scarlet? And did I not beseech thee, saying, Bind not thyself unto

these, for if thou dost, assuredly there will come unto thee that which is better? And she turned and went away in a rage.

CHAPTER III.

Then I, even I, Shegog, went in unto my own place. And I drew forth a weed, even a roll of the plant that cometh from the West, and I burned the weed before the brazen image which Punchikadnezzar the king had set up. And peace flowed into my mind, and righteousness came in upon my soul. Nevertheless, I tarried certain time, for I said, Who am I, that I should be blowed up by the wife of my bosom? But when the burnt sacrifice had been fully offered, I went forth and called, saying in a loud voice, Hi! hi!

CHAPTER IV.

And a voice came unto me, yea, a pleasant voice, and it answered, saying, But now thou saidest, Lo! Which is it, I pray thee, tell me truly, for am I not thy wife, and one of a thousand? And I said unto myself, but meekly, I would altogether that thou wert; howbeit, I have but one. Then I said unto her, Is all serene? and she said, All is serene. Nevertheless, I am sorry for the word which thou gavest unto them which dwell by Clapham. Then I answered, saying, Verily, the wind bloweth where it listeth, and Shegog dineth where he liketh. And I wunk a wink at her. Then I said, I will write a lying epistle unto them which dwell at Clapham, and will tell them a lie, even a —— lie, and we will go

unto the man Cottle, and unto his wife, which is deservedly called Belle, and unto his pleasant child, and we will eat flesh, and our souls shall bless him. And she said, Die in peace, for we will dine with the man Cottle.

I think the following document which I present to my readers was sent to me by S. B. on the occasion of the birth of my first grandchild. Those additions to humanity have come thick and fast since 1865 ; but I fancy it was in that year that I became entitled to the venerable name of grandfather. I consider myself, in respect of personal appearance, very unsuitable to the character ; anyway, if I were called upon to represent a grandad on canvas, I should decline to use so comparatively youthful-looking a person as myself for a model, though it may be truthfully said of me that

> "On my aged brow I bear
> The blossoms of the grave."

An illustrious and very dear friend of mine, though he was a double-dyed grandfather—witness a troop of grandchildren playing round him at Gad's Hill—disliked the appellation so much that he forbade the little ones to use it.

"What do they keep calling you?" said I.

"They are obedient children," replied Dickens. "Their infant lives would not be worth five minutes' purchase if they called me grandpapa. My name is *venerables* to them."

As the word alternated between wenbull, winible,

wenapple, etc., in the infantine chorus, I was obliged to ask for the interpretation.

"*Punch* Office,
"Nov. 21, 1865.

"FRITH, EVEN GRANDFATHER FRITH,

"With my whole soul do I congratulate thee and the grandmamma, and the venerable Aunt Sissy, and all the small uncles and infinitesimal aunts, or emmets. But chiefly I congratulate *thee*, O reverent and reverend, for the opportunity now afforded thee for the mending of thy ways. Henceforth we look for no frivolity from thee, no unseemly gibes and jests to which thou alone addest 'That's good,' and echo is silent. Henceforth thou must study to live at peace with all men, as becomes white hairs, and let us hear no more when —— announceth his 'last exhibition' that thou didst hope it would begin at three minutes to eight a.m., and be at Newgate. Truly this is a great chance for thee, O man of palettes, and aërial prospectives, and conscientious work, such as the *Athenæum* loves to indicate with the gesture called 'taking a sight.' Learn psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, to be chanted unto thy grandchild, and endeavour to obtain some knowledge of geography, etymology, tintacks, and prosody, that thou mayest not be put utterly to shame when the child shall demand information of thee. Leave off smoking, yet keep a box for thy younger friends who are not grandfathers. Scoff not at architects, for where wouldst thou be but for

houses? Nay, art not thou the founder of a house? Look no longer at the ankles of the other sex, save in the way of thy calling, and speak no soft words unto the maidens, saying, 'Lo, I adore thee,' when thou dost nothing of the kind. Abjure the society of low Bohemians like —— and ——, but cultivate the honest and virtuous, like Brooks, and, in so far as thou mayest, imitate him. Do not eat too much ham at breakfast, for temperance becometh the aged. Read few novels, but let those thou readest be of the best, as, 'Broken to Harness,' 'The Silver Cord,' 'An Artist's Proof,' and 'Blount Tempest.' Likewise, begin to dress less jauntily, and wear a high waistcoat like the Right Reverend Bellew, and the Right Reverend Brooks's. When thou goest to the Academy dinner, avoid, so far as thou canst, the taking too much wine, for what thing is less dignified than a swipey grandfather? Cherish these counsels in the apple of thine eye, and in the pineapple of thy rum; and be thankful that at a time of life when other young men may not ungracefully indulge in youthful levity, thou art called to a higher and a graver sphere. Buy a stick, and practise walking with it, bending thy back, and not perking up elegantly when a comely female passeth by. Have grave men to thy feasts, notably him who expecteth the interview with Mrs. Cottle, and to suffer as he never suffered before. So I greet thee, grandfather, and hope that thou wilt have many grandsons and granddaughters, and wilt ask me to the christening of them all.

"S. B."

In a former chapter I drew my reader's attention to the autograph craze from which so many of my fellow-creatures seem to suffer. As a quasi-proof of the money value at which one of my own was estimated, I produce the accompanying evidence from the pen of Shirley Brooks.

"June last, '67.

"My dear C——e,

"You always said you were a humorous party, but I never before had printed proof in support of the truth of your assertion. Here we are, however. I mean to buy this. It is from an autograph-seller's catalogue just received:

"116. Frith (W. P.)
"'Humorous Note.' 2 pp., 8vo. Oct. 14, 1855. 2s."

Vide your diary for date, and see to whom you writ humorously; it was before you were honoured with the intimacy and confidence, not to say respect and esteem, of

"S. B."

I find nothing in my diary to guide me to the fortunate receiver of this treasure. I feel sure Brooks didn't buy it, and I very much doubt if anybody else did.

This comes with an apology to Baron Reuter:

"6, Kent Terrace,
"Whit-Sunday.

"My dear Cottle,

"I present you with our work.

"'On the Eminent Telegraphist.

"'England believes his telegrams,
Whether they please or fright her;
Other electric sparks are right,
But he is always *righter*.'

That forces the most ignorant to sound the name right. Such is genius!

"Enclosed is 'Ethereal Mildness,' and the true way criticism should be writ. Whit-Sunday is Wet Sunday (laughter).

"'Mellor and Pochin.

"'There were two nice members for Stafford,
One's agent spent all they could *af*ford;
The other one's purity
Proved no security;
I walked 'em both clean out of Stafford.
Blackbourne' (*Judge*).

A man had been bankrupt eight times, each time paying two shillings and sixpence in the pound. He then declared that as eight half-crowns made a sovereign, he had paid twenty shillings in the pound. Is not this a neat way of calling a man a liar? It was a witness who contradicted the last witness. Being asked to explain how the latter could have said what he did, he pleasingly remarked, 'That Mr. ——'s mind was so unfortunately constituted that he was unable to recognise the harmony that should exist between words and facts.'

"I shall adopt this formula.

"Unaware that I have other matter for your honour's attention,

"I remain, with befitting respect,

"Yours grumpily,

"PLANTAGENET BROOKS."

The Brookses—Shirley and wife—spent some days with me and my family at Scarborough in the summer of 1865. I believe it is a common habit amongst the lower classes for the father of the feast (dinner, supper, or what not) to take off his coat before he sits down to it; this, I believe, is always done, irrespective of temperature. Paterfamilias is only happy in his shirt-sleeves. There is no affinity that I can discover between the homely dinner-table of the artisan and the pages of *Punch;* but most certainly before Editor Shirley Brooks began his weekly work for that periodical he always stripped to his shirt-sleeves. When I first found him writing away without his coat, I apologized for the heat of the day.

"Don't mention it," said he, "because it isn't half as hot as it ought to be."

"Then why have you taken your coat off?"

"Because I can't write a line unless I do."

Whether this peculiarity is confined to the editors of *Punch* I know not. I think Sterne found inspiration from a certain signet-ring. A clean shirt is said to have damped the ardour of Dr. Johnson! To the non-literary mind these peculiarities are very strange.

After a few—too few for us—pleasant days the Brookses took their departure *en route* for some place in Scotland, whence came the following :

"Woodfield,
"Inverness.

"My dear Frith,

"*Ici nous sommes.* Thanks for forwarding letters. I owe you a great heap of stamps, and shall have very great pleasure in paying you the compliment of continuing to owe them. The principal ornament of the hotel-room at Banavie (Benjamin Nevis) is a work by one Frith, R.A., representing somebody coming of age, and in our sitting-room the same artist is represented again by the girl warning a dog to behave himself. I wish you had been with us on this voyage, as the weather was perfect and the scenery (if you could appreciate it) came out strong. Curious animals on board, some very pretty faces included (if you could appreciate female loveliness), and some creditable ankles. It is as hot here as at Scarborough, and there are Highland games going on ; so there is no peace for the wicked, and very little for the ungodly. I am sitting in a clatter and chatter. Excuse good spelling. I wish Sarony, the photographer, would send me a few photos of myself here, for distribution among the Highland aristocracy. We are among swells. Three dukes arrived last night—Manchester, Wellington, and the Duke of Fire Engines, and we had some kind of prince with wopping blue eyes on board—Hesse, I think. Something better than your Leeds

and Wakefield swells, eh! but then we have no Royal Academicians. I hope, however, to see Phillip, R.A., to-day. He is much fêted by the resident gentry, I hear, which shows something like a respect for art, and is a proof that they really do not know what artists are.

"Write us a letter, and tell me how you all get on; has —— corrected his proofs and his morals? I wish you could see the tourists in the boats, they are lovely fun; and their enthusiasm, when they have carefully read the guide-book and are quite sure that they are at the right place to begin yelling, is most delicious. I had opportunities of lying unto several with extempore legends, and I am happy to say that I availed myself thereof.

"We shall be here for two or three days, I 'spose, and then to the Glen; but this will be the last address.

"Ever yours faithfully,

"SHIRLEY BROOKS."

Here followeth another holiday letter:

"Hotel des Bains,*
"Dieppe, Normandy,
"France,
"Monday, Oct. 8, 1866.

"MY DEAR COTTLE,

"I write because I said I would write, and to keep his promises is the folly of civilized man—the savages know better.

* "Bains is the French for bath, but there are none in the house."

"*Ici* we *sommes*, but *ici* we shall not *être*, I suppose, when this letter is delivered, as we propose to go home in a day or two. Not that I wish to go, for the place is delightful and the weather heavenly; but business is business, and not pleasure, and to attend to business is the folly of civilized man—savages know better.

"I wish with all my *cœur* that you were here; you would thoroughly enjoy it. If you want to be active, there are the loveliest walks, and hills, and ruins; and if you wish to be idle (which I generally do), there is a glorious sea, with a huge grass place—'La Plage'—before it, and we look upon that. The season is quite over, and so much the better says Shegog, who does not habitually dress three times per day, as is Parisian custom here. Very good living, and I have drunk to you frequently in Burgundy, and brought my spirits to Burgundy pitch, which you will not confound with the stuff used for fastening ships together—I don't mean two ships together, but the planks of one.

"Henry the Quatre gained the battle of Ivry here, and the Dieppois are still celebrated for their carving in ivory. I have enjoyed myself severely, and I can confidently recommend Dieppe. To be sure, I have not yet paid my bill, but as my landlord says that a cheque will do perfectly well, I consider that matter as off everybody's mind.

"The Catholic religion is established here, but Protestantism is tolerated, or I would not have remained a day. We English show our religion on

Sundays by wearing hats instead of wide-a-wakes, and smoking at the windows instead of in the garden before the house. It is gratifying to see such evidences of Christianity in a foreign land.

"The posts are the devil here, and it is a bore. All letters go to Paris; and though one is but sixty miles from England, you won't have this till Wednesday, I believe; but as you are not standing at the door waiting for it, you may not feel the delay so keenly as you otherwise would have done. The missis is now eager to get home—pardonable ambition in a *mère de famille*—but I am not impatient, and should like to stay another fortnight. Mrs. Milner-Gibson is here, and we have been for an excursion with her to Arques, where is an awfully fine old ruined castle built by William the Bastard, conqueror of you *Anglais*. There are some pleasant travellers at our hotel, and we lie to one another over our cigars about the Marquises and Royal Academicians whom we *say* we know. The *filles de chambre* are rather to be respected than admired. The beds are good, but have those springs which squeal out every time one moves a limb.

"I have heard from nobody here, which is the more singular as I gave nobody my address. I have not improved my mind here in the least, and my diary would (if kept) resemble the young fellow's letter to his father from Italy: 'The Alps is a very high mountain, and bullocks fetches no prices at all.' 'Dieppe is a sunny place, and cigars are 2½d.'

"I beg kindest, and, at the same time, most re-

spectful compliments to your good lady (I allude to Mrs. Frith) from me and mine.

"Agréez, etc.,

"SHEGOG, *in partibus infidelium.*"

Here we have a letter written on a sheet of hotel notepaper (fine engraving of hotel at top), evidently stolen, and carried off by the thief—one Brooks—to Ilfracombe.

"Esplanade,
"Penzance,
"Saturday, Sept. 21, 1867.

"MY DEAR COTTLE,

"'Behold 'em 'ere!' 'Ere is not Penzance, but Ilfracombe, Devonshire. The above represents feebly (I am now critical in art, for I have got the very house occupied last year by Tom Taylor) the stunning hotel at Penzance where we were exceedingly comfortable for some days, and whence we made 'excrescences' to the Land's End and other wonderful works of nature. 'It is a holy thing,' said Mr. Squeers, 'to be in a state of nature.'

"This reminds me that we went down a copper-mine, half a mile under the sea, by a wire rope tied to a car about as big as a coal-scuttle—a sensation! —but a previous sensation was reading in the guide-book, 'Before descending you must divest yourself of every article of apparel, and——' Here I closed the book, and put it away as S—b—ian; but learning that you could compromise by taking off your coat

and tucking up your trousers, and putting on a miner's dress, white, splashed with yellow mud, I reconsidered the subject. You should have seen Mrs. Shirley in a long white thing like a vast night-gown, and with a thick yellow dreadnought! But she did the perilous descent gallantly, commending her soul to the supreme powers, and the splashes through the crevices to the devil (I believe).

"The Duke of Cornwall, Plymouth, is a splendid new hotel, with all the comforts, and close to the train. We did all the sights, including the Breakwater, which is not worth doing. But the coast scenery of both Cornwall and Devon is glorious. Very likely I am telling you what you know, for Reynolds was born in Devonshire, and you might have been born anywhere you chose. We have done an awful lot, and I am glad to have got to a resting-place for a week in this love-ley place. We are on the top of a high hill, and see Lundy Isle, Wales, Jerusalem, and Madagascar; and to-day we are going to have squab-pie and junket.

"From Du Maurier I glean that you are all a happy colony, and I hope to see you after we get back. At Helston there were two pictures, regarded as household treasures. One was 'Coming of Age,' and the other the 'Sports in the Olden Time.' I obtained much *kudos* by saying that I knew the painter—that I had stood for the young heir; and the grandad in the other was Spurgeon, to whom *I* had introduced you when you persuaded him to sit to you. This will become a Cornish legend. At

Plymouth Station there is a three-legged cat, and not a Manx cat (good), but one whose leg was cut off by a railway-engine. This is the most remarkable thing I have seen, except the Devil's Bellows at Kinance Bay, which is more remarkable; but I do not know why.

"I have had my hair cut by a barber called Petherwick Peninluma; and I have had my old shoes mended for 1s. 9d., and they are more comfortable than my new ones, which cost a guinea. Such, my Cottle, is a lesson that should teach us how little real value there is in money, on which, moreover, Providence sets no store, or He would not bestow it on the unworthy, like ——; but no matter, I am in charity with all mankind. My address is 5, Castle Terrace, Ilfracombe. Give us a hail! My wife says I have taken her 'out of the world.' She eats well, however, for an angel.

"Ever faithfully yours,

"SHIRLEY BROOKS.

"I made a good joke. We had struggled up a steep mountain, and I rested at a tree, and asked 'why it was like a hospital counterpane.' They gave it up with abuse. 'Because it's on the top of the 'ill.' Wit, you see, does not depend upon locality."

From the following letter, I gather that the Brookses had been staying with us at Ramsgate in the autumn of 1867, and that it was at their

departure by train that Shirley heard the echo of our imaginary voices in the tunnel :

"London,
"Oct. 12, 1867.

"My dear Cottle,

"What a time it seems since I saw you! Abstinence—I mean absence—makes the heart grow fonder—of somebody else. Oh, ile of booty (Thanet), fare thee well!

"I heard all you said when we went away. You forgot the echo of the tunnel. But it was nearly true, only I am *not* a cigar-smoking porpoise that fancies himself a bird of Paradise, and it would *not* be better if I talked less and read more. The allusion to my gray hair and frivolity I forgive, because *gray* hair is better than *none at all.* But you had no right to say that I 'looked like a cad, and you were glad none of your noble patrons were on the platform,' because I have always spoken well of you in low newspapers ; and as for O'Neil laughing at your wit (?), that is the only way he pays for his mammoth breakfasts and mastodon dinners. The ladies' remarks I forgive, because I have heard them say much worse things of you. La belle Fanny is, however, wrong in saying my wife is sixty ; she is only fifty-three next week. Sissy was right (and I thank your sweet child for her courage) in saying that she didn't care what any of you said, I was the only lively, unaffected, agreeable, playful guest (who combined the paternal, fraternal, and infernal)

you had had since you came to that detestable and snobbish Ramsgate.

"We had our other crosses. At Margate got in a handsome woman (my wife says she wasn't, but she was), and three of the most villainously ugly brats ever permitted to live. Also a man with a dog. The little beasts—four—yelped, howled, ran about the carriage, growled in tunnels, and otherwise misbehaved themselves all the way; and the mother smiled as if they were angels. And all I could do was to pinch the child nearest to me, and sniff haughtily, as Ramsgate sniffs at Margate, and ask the guard whether there were no places in the *third class* into which we could get. If the mother had been ugly, I would have blown up; but she had the sweetest smile, and so——

"My kind love to Mrs. Frith, who is the only one, except Siss, that appreciates me. I am heartily glad to get back to my own vine and my own tooth-brush. Accept the enclosed unpublished trifle:

"'When lovely woman grows too jolly
And scarcely minds what things she says,
And when her lover, melancholy,
Reproves her for her flirting ways,
The only mode retreat to cover,
To hit him hard with her reply;
In fact, to quite shut up that lover
And make him wretched, is to—cry.'

"Love to you all, though you don't deserve it,

"From yours ever,

"S. B."

Edwin Landseer died in 1873, and was buried in St. Paul's. I attended his funeral, in common with all my brother members of the Royal Academy. As the procession was forming, a group of artists stood upon the pavement in Trafalgar Square. I called the attention of a friend to one amongst the group, and said, "That youthful-looking gentleman will one day be President of the Royal Academy." The person indicated was Mr. Leighton, now Sir Frederick, and President of the Academy. I cannot resist boasting of this successful prophecy—worth noting, I think, as a very rare instance of success in notoriously hazardous guess-work. Gentlemen of the press have vast influence, and it was pretty generally exerted in favour of Landseer's final resting-place—notably by Brooks, as the following letter proves :

"33, Old Steine,
"Brighton,
"Oct. 3, 1873.

"My dear Cottle,

"I've no note-paper; but that's a detail. I've nothing to say, and that's another. You're another. Yes; I have to say this—that the Royal Academy ought to stir themselves up, and bury Sir Edwin in St. Paul's. I wrote *that* in print *yesterday*, and it is gone to India; it was not hinted to me by the *D. T.*, as you would, of course, with your usual candour, suggest.

"We have lovely weather here—almost too hot. I shall come up on Wednesday; but the missis is enjoying it so much, that she asks for another week;

so I shall go down again on Saturday. I have been reading up about this place and George IV. I remember his death well; and also that I tried my sucking muse on a sweet elegy on his demise, beginning:

"'And is our monarch gone, and is it so?
O Albion, yet again thy tears must flow!'

"Fancy blubbering over Turveydrop! But if we waited to *feel* before we wrote, there wouldn't be half so much good writing as there is. 'Precious good thing, too!' says you. Apelles, stick to thy last (Apelles was not the same as Apella). They have turned the Pavilion stables into a free museum—a good many pictures, of which a few are good; and some very funny old china, besides the regular improve-your-mind business of owls, oysters, oolites, etc. The catalogue is not to be had, being in reviewing hands, or I'd send it you. Do you remember a 'Birthday Party' of O'Neil's?—children dancing: a good deal of *go* in it—that's one of the pictures; and another is that by A. Solomon, of the girl fainting at seeing her rival's negress dressed in the former's brocade. Also Millais's 'Bonny Prince Charley'—a woman sewing a cockade on.

"My dear Cottle, when I think of the pretty faces we daily saw at Folkestone, and when I walk on this parade and see every variety of *frump*—some so hideous!—I am ready to weep; and should, but for being more ready to curse at the eternal and infernal music that is going on from early morn to *Jew*-ey eve. Except in some girls' schools, there is

not a pretty face in Brighton ; but that is nothing. The place is full of criminal, d——able *hideousness ;* and it ought to draw down heaven's wrath, for I am sure this is the City of the *Plain.*

" Ever yours faithfully,

" S. B."

CHAPTER XVII.

ADMIRATION.

The faces of public men—notably actors and politicians—have been made so familiar to us by photography in these later days, as to cause some of those of a modest and retiring nature to refuse to submit themselves to the photographer, and thus render themselves easily recognisable as they walk the streets. I have often thought that to the actor it may be the reverse of agreeable to be unable to stir from his own door without being pointed at; looked at lovingly by admirers, and scowled at by detractors. To the actor applause is the breath of life. Mrs. Siddons said that a cold audience always paralyzed her efforts. If she failed to move them she remained unmoved herself. Jefferson—the inimitable Rip Van Winkle—told me that until what he called an electric current was established between himself and his audience, acting to it was a misery.

Impersonal admiration is legitimate and delightful; but when it assumes the form of staring at a man as he takes his walks abroad, it becomes personal and generally offensive. To my dear old friend the late

John Parry, however (though, like all men of true genius, modest to a fault, a fatal fault—for his distrust of his powers created fits of nervous prostration distressing to witness), street recognition was a great enjoyment. As I have walked with him he would say, "See those two men coming; they know me, I can tell by their faces."

Then John would try to look unconcerned as the men passed us with sidelong glances of admiration and a seeming half-inclination to take off their hats. "There—didn't I tell you; it's quite curious, isn't it?"

The following, told me by Parry himself, fully illustrates my subject.

Several years ago there was exhibited in Bond Street a picture by my old friend Holman Hunt, called, I think, "The Shadow of Death"—an all-important Scripture subject, representing Christ after work in the carpenter's shop liable for the moment to human infirmity, for He is stretching Himself as one does in weariness, and in so doing He projects upon the wall the shadow of the Cross. The picture created a great sensation, and its exhibition drew admirers in crowds. Those entrusted with the showing of the picture were past masters in the art of exhibiting. The light was tenderly modified, skilfully arranged drapery set off the colours; the auditorium was in semi-darkness, nearly all the light admitted falling on to the picture. People spoke in whispers; in fact, you felt that if you were not in church you were next door to it. Parry was short-sighted,

and he stood for a moment in the light which was thrown upon the picture, before he made his way with some difficulty to a vacant place immediately behind two ladies. These ladies were conversing in whispers, but loud enough to be heard by their neighbour. Said one lady to the other:

"Surely the old masters never equalled this wonderful——*did you see the gentleman who just came in?* How natural is the expression of weariness, and how——"

"*Yes, who is he?*" interrupted the friend.

"Look at the eyes—life itself. *John Parry.*"

"*No! Where?*"

"*Just behind us.* And the figure of the Blessed Virgin—what a grand conception!"

"*He is a very plain man,*" again interrupted the friend.

"*Yes; he is ugly, but so wonderfully clever. You must go and see Mrs. Roseleaf's party.* Oh, do look at the shavings and the dress of the Virgin—so real you could," etc., etc.

Multifarious are the forms in which admiration shows itself. In the year 1843 I went to the Highlands, accompanied by my friend Egg. Amongst other show-places, we visited a castle belonging, I think, to Lord Breadalbane, at the head of Loch Tay. The castle—a short time before our arrival, in company with a party of tourists—had been honoured by a visit from the Queen, who planted a tree to celebrate the occasion. This was shown to our party with much pride by the Scotch gardener.

"And ye see that seat," said the man; "it was just on that seat that her Majesty sat after she had planted the tree."

As he spoke he pointed to a long seat common to gardens. A woman in the small crowd exclaimed:

"Did she now—God bless her! Whereabouts did she sit?"

"Eh, woman," replied the gardener, "ye should know better than ask such redeckulous questions. How can I tell the praceese spot on which her Majesty sat. Why do ye ask that?"

"Because I want to sit just where the Queen did, and I will, too."

This remarkable female put her threat into execution by *sitting all over the seat*, thus ensuring for herself, in a general way, the exact spot on which the royal limbs had reposed.

Another extravagant example of admiration occurs to me. Amongst the most enthusiastic admirers of my friends Irving, and his admirable coadjutor Miss Terry, were certain young ladies then in their college days. Permission was granted by the head of a certain college to a specified number of students to visit the Lyceum while a play of Shakespeare was in the full swing of its prosperous career. The play was over, and the young ladies—about a round dozen in number—found their way to the stage-door in full determination to see their idol in his habit as he lives, on his exit from the scene of his triumphs. The great actor appeared, and found an avenue of young ladies through which he had to walk to his carriage, the

door of which was already in possession of—may I say it ?—one of the boldest. The poor actor was dreadfully embarrassed—a pretty young lady transforming herself into a footman ! Profuse was his sorrow that she should give herself such trouble ; the young ladies were really too kind, and so on. "No ; she really must not. He could shut the door himself." So saying, with doffed hat, my friend shook hands with the lady footman, and, wishing the fair bevy good-night, the actor drove away.

Of course the lady-footman's hands were gloved. No sooner had the carriage disappeared, than, *credat Judæus !* the hand grasped by Irving was denuded of its glove, a pair of scissors was produced, the glove was cut to pieces, each worshipper receiving a portion, which is very likely a cherished possession to this hour. Should these lines meet the eyes of any of the young actresses in the foregoing little comedy, they must forgive me for introducing it. I know their college ; but nothing will induce me to mention it. It is possible I may know some of their names ; they will be for ever sacred.

The condition of mind in which a devoted worshipper finds him or herself, after listening in rapt admiration to Shakespearian poetry declaimed by a genius who seems to present new beauties to his listener—beauties unsuspected till discovered through the actor's interpretation—is not one from which it is easy to descend to common things. A desire to see more closely the man who has given us such pleasure is natural and excusable. So much may be

urged in excuse for the numbers that often besiege the stage-door of the Lyceum, their object being a nearer sight of, and perhaps a word from, the hero or heroine of the evening.

"Oh, Miss Terry, it is so kind of you to speak to us! We do admire you so! We have been waiting so long! When do you think Mr. Irving is likely to leave the theatre?"

"That is more than I can say. I don't think he has begun his supper yet."

"Oh, do tell us what he has for supper!" said a shrill voice.

"Well," said naughty Miss Terry, very gravely, "let me see. To-night—well, to-night I think it is tripe and onions."

Tripe and onions! Charles I., after his pathetic parting with his children—when tears coursed each other down his face—eating tripe and onions!

Another example of admiration occurs to me. *Tempora mutantur*, etc., and in nothing is change more evident than in the patronage of art. "The nobility" was ever on the lips of poor Haydon. In his early time they were the only purchasers. Not only the nobility, but the King was the frequent patron of such men as Wilkie, Mulready, and Haydon himself. George IV., when Regent, added many pictures to the royal collection; and after he ascended the throne his love of art continued to show itself in purchases generally guided by knowledge and taste. The Waterloo Gallery at Windsor, in which may be seen the beauties and defects of Lawrence, owes its

existence to the Regent. In the present reign Court patronage is rarer, though it is occasionally liberally dispensed. It may be said that, from the great increase of wealthy buyers in the middle class, Crown encouragement is less needed. In the instance I am about to relate, I think the picture which had been brought to George IV.'s notice was not of first-rate quality, nor was it the work of a well-known artist. The painter, however, was a friend of the lord-in-waiting, through whose influence the picture was placed before the King. George IV. was unwell at the time, and the painting was displayed upon a chair in the King's dressing-room for his Majesty's criticism.

"What do you think of it?" said the King to the courtier.

"Sir, it is most interesting; the colouring is beautiful, and the chiaroscuro is——"

"What does the man want for it?"

"Only a hundred guineas, your Majesty; a very modest price, I think."

"Ah! I should like Lady —— to see it. Be so good as to ask her to come here, will you? No, don't shut the door; this room is so confoundedly hot."

The lord-in-waiting soon found Lady ——, who had overheard most of the conversation.

"What am I to say?" whispered the lady.

"Oh, praise it—praise it!" said the lord.

Thus instructed, the lady tripped into the room, caught sight of the work of art, and exclaimed:

"What a lovely picture! Oh, what a delightful picture!"

That settled the matter; and the picture was added to the royal collection, to be relegated eventually most likely to the limbo of inferior works.

This anecdote comes from one of the officials at the Palace, who heard the rapid conversation between the lord-in-waiting and Lady ——.

I could recount more instances of admiration, justly and unjustly bestowed; but I will content myself with an example which has its ludicrous side.

John Dean was a pupil of my old master Sass—a favourite pupil; for he was a youth of decided ability —until he established a school of art in opposition to his master; and then nothing was too bad for him. Nature had been unkind to Dean as regards personal appearance. Sass has said to me more than once, when I failed to catch the beauty of an antique face, "Why, what on earth do you mean by making the Apollo look like that? It's nearly as ugly as that wretch Dean." The school under the management of the ungrateful pupil did not succeed. "Was it possible," said Sass, "with such a fellow as Dean to conduct it? Look at the miserable man's pictures; he has forgotten all that he learnt here!" This was scarcely true; for so long as Dean contented himself with portraiture, he was fairly successful. But he was ambitious, and nothing would content him but success in what he called "high art,"

and he succeeded in making high art very low art indeed. The man's vanity and greediness for praise surpassed anything in my experience before or since his time. A fellow-student of mine said to me, "When I go to see Dean, I try to think of the most outrageous form of praise that I can invent. I pile it up to a sickening height, and yet the fellow is never satisfied; he always quotes something that that colonel friend of his has been saying that outtops me."

The mysterious colonel puzzled me; but I soon made his acquaintance in spirit, though never in the flesh. Dean was successful in a competition for an altar-piece for a church somewhere in the City. The picture, a very large one, was completed, and I went to see it.

I was young at that time, and more ignorant, perhaps, than I am now; for I thought there was much merit in the baptism of St. John, and I praised it heartily.

Dean looked uncomfortable, and said:

"I thought *you*"—great stress on *you*—"would have been one of the first to see it."

"See what?" said I.

"See what!" echoed Dean. "Why, what my friend Colonel Blank saw in a moment—that the colouring and drawing of that picture reminded him of the best work of Titian; but there, you fellows don't know much about it."

Dean's painting got worse and worse. Many a desperate attempt did he make in the field of

history. Our praise became fainter and fainter, until one memorable day, when he told us that the colonel had just left the house as we entered it, and that in future he should content himself with that gallant officer's criticism, and would trouble us no more.

We afterwards discovered that the colonel was a Mrs. Harris; and, to use Mrs. Gamp's memorable words, "there was no sich a person." He was a creature of Dean's brain, used to feed his egregious vanity—comically enough sometimes; for when our admiration was expressed strongly enough, he would say, "How curious! Now, do you know those are almost the very same words used about that very picture by my old friend Colonel Blank! He was here this morning. You know the man I mean—old Waterloo officer — wounded — limps a little! Wonder you've never met him! Capital amateur work he does, I can tell you; more real knowledge of art than old Sass and all you fellows put together."

Poor John Dean! his name is unknown to fame—a fate likely to overtake you, my young brother-student, if you allow your love of praise to blind you to your imperfections.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ON SELF-DELUSION AND OTHER MATTERS.

Few experiences of my life have been stranger to me than the instances I have known of self-delusion in artists, young and old. Burns says, could we but

> "See oursels as others see us,
> It wad frae monie a blunder free us,
> And foolish notion,"

and he is undoubtedly right; but it is terrible to think of the hopeless condition of mind in which some of us would find ourselves if the scales were suddenly to fall from our eyes, and we could see our pictures as others see them. It has been said that a vain and plain woman does not see her true reflection in her mirror, but an image created by vanity; this is too often the case with the painter, and when he is rudely awakened from his dream—either by candid friends or by the rejection of his work from every exhibition—his astonishment is only equalled by his disgust.

"What on earth do you mean by turning out my 'Hercules'?" he writes to one of the Royal Academy

Council; "it's a confounded shame! Do you suppose, after painting all these years, I don't know that there will be pictures by outsiders inferior to mine, and hung in good places? As to your own (I don't mean to be personal, respected R.A.), you go on year after year parading your weaknesses, seven or eight of them sometimes, and exclude works because you fear to come into competition with them. I really don't know what you R.A.'s are made of. I have been an exhibitor for thirty years; lots of your shillings have been earned by me, and this is the way I am treated! My portrait of Mr. Blank"—naming a celebrity—" has been rejected too; now, all Blank's friends think mine the only true likeness that has been done of him, and as good artists as any of you have assured me that, as a picture, this portrait can hold its own with the best ever painted," etc., etc.

It is of little effect to reply to such an effusion, that the Council differed *in toto* from the painter and his friends; that they would have been dishonest if they had excluded better work to give place to his own; and that the fact of his having been an exhibitor for thirty years gave him no right to continue exhibiting, unless his work surpassed that of his competitors.

With respect to the charge so often and so justly made of the admission of effete work of old and young members of the Academy, I confess that I have often felt shame and humiliation when I have seen work that would undoubtedly have been condemned if it had been presented by an outsider,

occupying prominent positions on the Academy walls, to the injury of the exhibition, as well as to the reputation of the producer. Reform of this abuse is one under consideration at this time, and I entertain a strong conviction that means will be found to modify it.

The strange appeals that reach members of the Hanging Committee previous to the selection of pictures for the annual exhibitions would surprise the uninitiated. An artist has painted the Mayor of his county town—it is a subscription portrait—if it can be placed, his fortune is made; if it is condemned, he and his family, six girls, are ruined. A drawing-master depends upon his name appearing in the catalogue for his subsistence, for unless he is permitted to show his "Alfred the Great," his pupils will desert him, and he will lose his position—result, starvation. Another aspirant tells us that he has sent *up*, as he calls it—why *up* I know not—a small picture, and if it can only be hung, we may hang it at the top, and upside down, if we choose. That same individual, when his wishes—except the upside down part of them—have been acceded to, has been heard to say, "Look where the wretches have hung my picture—a set of jealous ruffians! I would rather a thousand times have had my picture out than skyed like that."

I have often wondered that some irate exhibitor has not taken the law into his own hands, and removed his picture from the walls. The opportunity is afforded him on the outsiders' varnishing-day, when

he probably finds himself on the top of fearfully high steps staring at his picture, which he could scarcely recognise from below. A sharp penknife passed round the outer edges of the canvas would place the picture in the author's possession, leaving us the empty frame. I don't know what the law would say to such a proceeding, and I venture to advise no one to try it; but I have seen artists so angry at the position assigned to their work, that I should scarcely have been surprised if they had set law and everything else at defiance. No instance of this kind has ever occurred at the Academy; but I remember an example at the Society of British Artists in Suffolk Street, when a painter cut his picture out of its frame, and quietly walked off with it under his arm.

In exhibitions abroad, the disappointed sometimes adopt a different method. A foreign painter, whose works are well known here, destroyed his picture by painting a coat of black over the whole of it, rather than allow it to remain where—in his opinion—it could not be properly seen.

An interval of about eight years elapses before a member of the Royal Academy finds himself again one of the dreaded and dreadful Hanging Committee. We serve in rotation, and the office—painful as it is—is seldom declined. Within the last ten years the contributions from outside have trebled in number, and the difficulties and disappointments have increased in proportion. In this year's (1888) catalogue the number of exhibited works of art of every description, including sculpture, architecture, water-

colours, miniatures, etchings, engravings, and black and white drawings, amounted to two thousand and seventy-seven ; these were selected from nine thousand three hundred and eighty-five — nearly three times as many as were before us in 1880.

Eight days were spent in carefully sifting the wheat from the chaff. And what chaff some of it was !

Each year the very worst attempts at painting ever perpetrated come before the Council of selection. Every single specimen of impudent imbecility is examined ; self-delusion is seen in its most striking form, while some idiotic attempts seem presented as jokes. As the Council of the Academy is composed of human beings liable to error, mistakes are sometimes made ; but injustice, proceeding either from carelessness or—what we are often charged with—spite, jealousy, or indifference, is never committed. It is to our interest to secure the best material for our exhibitions ; our existence depends upon them.

Some of the excellent work in the present exhibition, 1888, is by students, male and female, of the Royal Academy. Our students are numbered by hundreds ; their education is entirely gratuitous, and the means to continue our work of art-education depends upon the success of our exhibitions. That good pictures—to our loss—sometimes fail to find places on our walls cannot be denied, and until the Academy will consent to limit the enormous numbers sent in every year, these misfortunes will continue. It is simply impossible amongst such masses of

pictures of all shapes and sizes to prevent some worthy ones escaping notice. At least, this is my opinion.

To one who is not more than ordinarily sensitive, the pangs with which he sees—as the arrangement of the exhibition draws towards a close—the inevitable exclusion of excellent work are distressing in the extreme. "Why, then," I hear someone say, as he points to an indifferent picture of an outsider in an out-of-the-way corner, "did you hang that thing there?" The honest answer is, "Because we could not find a better one to fit the place; we could not pull down all the pictures hung on the *side* of a room to enable us to fill the *corner* better." On "outsiders' varnishing-day," the hangmen attend, sometimes to receive thanks, sometimes abuse. Our presence is compulsory, for no change of the position of any work can be permitted, even to what is called the *tilting* of it, without the consent of one of the pictures' executioners.

It is delightful to see faces brighten as young or old painters discover their pictures placed upon the "line." The brightness becomes dimmed as the eye of the discoverer travels upwards, and extinct altogether as it rests on what he sees must be his second work, but how changed—on the sky-line.

"Now look here," I hear him say, "I am much obliged to you for giving me so good a place for one of my pictures; but if I deserved that, how can I deserve such a bad one for the other? All my friends thought it the better of the two."

"The answer to that is," says a hanger, "that your picture on the line is a good one, and the one we have skyed is not; indeed, we wondered that so clever a fellow as you could be so unequal in your work."

"Not much harmony of opinion between you and my friends," says the exhibitor.

"No," is the reply; "self-delusion is very common, and in this case your friends have increased yours."

As the hanger concludes, a young lady trips up to him, palette and brushes *en evidence:*

"May I have my picture down? It wants varnishing. I am subject to faintness, and I should certainly tumble off those dreadful steps. May I?"

"To be sure you may."

"And oh, Mr. Frith, you see that fiery sky in the next picture to mine; it does hurt mine so; would you mind asking that gentleman—there he is, on those steps, working on the foreground of his picture—just ask him to tone down that dreadful sky? It's quite unnatural; nobody ever saw such a sunset as that. Tell him it kills my picture."

Among the curious sights that may be seen on outsiders' varnishing-day is one of some unknown artist working at his solitary little picture, which has found a place at the top of the room, during every moment of the time allowed—from morning to night, in fact—without producing the slightest appreciable change. The picture is perhaps a poor affair—an accidental case of fitting; and most probably not one of the thousands of visitors, beyond the painter's

own friends, will ever notice it. In each room a similarly eccentric individual may be observed—a painful sight, because it is certain that the poor efforts to attract attention will be thrown away; and one wonders how a man can feel a disposition towards so hopeless an attempt. And then the cries for *tilting* are incessant, and always agreed to, so long as the advantage can be permitted without injury to neighbouring pictures.

The painter of a picture of slight pretensions finds his work so placed that neither tilting nor any other treatment can bring it into a prominence it does not deserve. "If I can have my picture tilted forward at the top I should be obliged. If you will be so good as to stand here and look up, you'll see it shines so that one can't tell what it is about." Poor fellow! nobody will care whether it shines or not, and nobody will want to know what it is about. However, he has it tilted to his heart's content.

If some pictures could speak, what strange things they might tell us of their adventures before finding a resting-place in the exhibition! By far the greater number of pictures offered to the Selecting Committee are condemned at once—very few are *accepted*, for in that event they must be hung—the rest are made what is called *doubtful*, and it is out of the last class that the exhibition, so far as numbers are concerned, is chiefly made. It follows, then, that a picture may figure in the doubtful list for years, literally, before it finds a place on the walls. Instances are known of pictures being re-

jected one year, made doubtful the next, and hung the third. In the exhibition this year there is a large and, I think, indifferent picture, which was new to me, but not to one of the carpenters, who was heard to say, as he and his friends fixed it at the top of the room, "Well, there you are again; this is the fourth time as we've put you up; and you needn't be sure of stopping, for they'll very likely have you down again."

I may conclude this chapter with an example of delusion, which is, I think, as grave in its character and effects as self-delusion; in fact, it is but another kind of self-delusion. It was the habit of the wise-acres who called themselves pre-Raphaelites to ridicule—more or less—the works of all painters, ancient and modern, who had practised their art since the time of Raphael; including that gentleman also, as their cognomen implies.

In our National Gallery there is a picture painted by one Titian, called "Bacchus and Ariadne," which happens to be one of the wonders of the world in the estimation of all sensible people. The pre-Raphaelites knew better, as what follows will prove. A friend of mine received the distinguished honour of an invitation to tea with one of the chiefs of the P. R. Brethren (I am speaking of a time long since passed), of which, as in duty bound, he hastened to avail himself. Tea was given in the studio, so that my friend might improve his mind by studying pre-Raphaelite work. Amongst several eccentric efforts on the walls were certain pictures hung upside down.

Amongst the rest was an excellent copy of Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne," supplemented by other copies from old masters in similarly degraded positions.

"May I ask," said my friend, "why those copies are hung upside down? I am obliged to break my neck to look at them, and they seem to me admirable copies."

"Yes," said the great pre-Raphaelite, "they are good copies of bad pictures. We hung them as you see because they look just as good, or just as bad, one way as another."

As I cannot hope to present my readers with a more apt example of delusion than the above, I close this paper with it.

CHAPTER XIX.

FASHION IN ART.

The caterers for public amusement have to deal with an amalgam composed of ignorance, prejudice, fickleness, and vulgarity to a degree altogether out of proportion to the critical faculty which is the outcome of enlightenment, and by which the truth of public judgment can alone be tested. The goddess Fashion reigns supreme. Where, I wonder, is the realm of the deity whence issue decrees so readily and universally obeyed? Was it from a French dressmaker's shop that orders came for the dismissal of crinoline, in vogue some years ago, and the substitution of the tightly-clinging skirt, which in ugly folds enveloped ladies' figures from the waist downwards, making walking difficult?

This rushing from one extreme to another, so characteristic of Fashion's freaks, was pursued for a time; and then succeeded by the lady's dress of to-day. I have always thought that the human form should be allowed, in its beautiful varying lines, to suggest its fittest covering. The gigot sleeve of 1830 was a monstrosity in my eyes, because instead of following

the lines of the arms it directly contradicted them by swelling into an enormous balloon-shaped bag, extending from the shoulder to the wrist. It was reserved, however, for the present time to surpass all others within my recollection by a fashion so monstrously ugly, so gross an exaggeration of nature, indeed, so unlike any natural form, as to rob the female figure of all its grace. I need scarcely say that I allude to the hideous hump which, in a profile view, succeeds in deforming every woman to whom it is attached. This thing, composed, as I understand, of steel, or wool, or "all sorts of things," must have been an attempt of the Parisian modiste to see how easily the servile followers of fashion could be imposed upon.

Fashion in art, though not so immediately palpable in its results, is no less serious a factor in the history of painting. There are instances of great artists who have retained public favour to the end of their lives, and there have been admirable painters who have never been fashionable at all.

Vandyke died at the age of forty-two, but he lived long enough to outlive the fashion for his portraits; disgusted with the falling off in his sitters, he went to Paris, where I fancy he met with no better fortune, for he was soon in England again. Mortification is said to have aggravated the illness which seized him on his return, and he died leaving a name never to be forgotten, and perhaps the most illustrious that ever suffered from the caprice of fashion.

Hogarth's blunt and truthful rendering of nature

seems to have been fatal to his prospects as a fashionable portrait-painter, if—as is very unlikely—he ever had the desire to shine in that character.

Fashion and I are again at issue, however, for the goddess, after allowing Hogarth a short season of success in what he called "Conversation pieces"—in other words, family or other groups, in which portraiture was the main feature—deserted him, happily for the world, and he was literally forced into the production of those scenes from real life in dramatic form which have made his name immortal. Though, as I say, I am at issue with Fashion, because she ought not to have forsaken the painter of Captain Coram, William Hogarth, Miss Fenton, and other admirable portraits, I freely forgive her in consideration of the happy consequences of her neglect. But did Fashion follow this great genius in his new departure? No; Fashion became as blind as justice, and such pictures as the "Marriage *à la Mode*" were sold for twenty guineas apiece. "The March to Finchley" was finished: no purchaser appeared; a raffle was resorted to: some shares were sold, the rest given to the Foundling Hospital; the hospital won the picture, and possesses it now. Putting on one side what may be called the literary qualities of Hogarth's works—the power of writing comedy and tragedy with the pencil—the artistic language in which the lessons are conveyed is altogether admirable. In colour, form, composition, and execution, Hogarth's works are a "continual feast" to every true artist.

Having turned her back upon Hogarth, in what vagary did Fashion next indulge?

The name of Gainsborough as a portrait and landscape painter stands in indisputable eminence to all but Fashion, who put her *imprimatur* on a certain man named Glover. While Gainsborough's landscapes hung unsold on the walls of his painting-room, the works of Glover took the town, and sold for high prices. I have seen some of this gentleman's landscapes, and I think it would be impossible to find better examples as illustrations of the disastrous effects of ignorance bred by Fashion.

From what we know of Gainsborough's early history, it would seem that great difficulties had to be encountered before a hold could be obtained upon the public in favour of his portraits, now so highly and deservedly valued. There is a letter in existence written by a nobleman—who generally made one amongst the crowd that visited Bath for health or pleasure—in which he informs a friend at a distance that there is a man in Bath taking likenesses, who seems to have a good deal of employment amongst the patients and others. "He has no more power of painting," says this noble critic, "than that usually seen on the signboard of a public-house; but he certainly has the knack of catching a likeness. His name is Gainsborough." No doubt this interesting discovery took place when Gainsborough was young; but however immature the early performances of such a man may have been, they must have presented evidence enough of the powers that dis-

tinguished his later works, to have saved them from the comparison made by the noble connoisseur.

Reynolds' transcendent powers enabled him to defy Fashion. Not so Romney, who is, I think, second to Reynolds and Gainsborough, but possessing charms in his work which makes the neglect that pursued him when Fashion turned her back very strange. At one time, he says himself, he thought he must have planted cannon at his door in Cavendish Square to overawe the eager crowds that pressed upon him for their portraits; when suddenly, and in the plenitude of his powers, Cavendish Square was deserted, and he was left without a sitter! Of all the freaks of Fashion, this is to me the most wonderful. By slow degrees a little employment filtered back again, but the painter was no longer fashionable—his reign was over.

As I draw nearer to my own time, I can speak of instances of the working of Fashion within my own knowledge.

Constable's great merits were first recognised in France, with the result of an influence upon French landscape art that is felt to the present moment. As a boy I was taken by my master, Mr. Sass, to see Constable. We found him at work in his studio with many unsold pictures about him. I remember every word that was said on the occasion.

"This young man is one of your pupils, is he, Sass? Ah! I am always glad to see any of them here."

There was a piece of the trunk of a tree in the room, some weeds, and some dock-leaves.

"And what line of the art do you intend to follow?" said Constable to me.

"I don't know, sir," I replied. That was the truth—I certainly did not.

"Well, whatever it may be," said the great landscape-painter, "never do anything without nature before you, if it be possible to have it. See those weeds and the dock-leaves? They are to come into the foreground of this picture. I know dock-leaves pretty well, but I should not attempt to introduce them into a picture without having them before me. I think I would advise your young friend to avoid landscape-painting, eh! Sass? Or if you do paint landscapes, they must be pretty ones—eh! Sass?—like ——'s. I hear he has sold his picture to —— for five hundred pounds!"

I thought the handsome face assumed rather a bitter, disappointed expression. The conversation was continued between Sass and Constable in an undertone; and Sass told me, as we walked home, that Constable had expressed great disappointment at a recent instance of undeserved neglect. "The day will come," said Sass, "when Constable will be understood; the patrons neglect him now, and if he hadn't private means he would be at starvation point."

I must not forget to mention something which I think landscape-painters should always bear in mind. In one of Constable's pictures, amongst those in his studio, was one in which a kingfisher or a heron —I forget which—had been introduced. I admired

it, and Constable said, "Yes, I saw it. I had sat a long time without a living thing making its appearance. I always sit till I see some living thing; because if any such appears, it is sure to be appropriate to the place. If no living object shows itself, I put none into my picture."

As examples of the severe study to which Constable subjected himself, I may mention a great number of studies in oil, of skies, now in my possession; with notices on the backs, of the time of day, direction of the wind, etc.

Fashion has turned the light of her countenance on Constable's work at last; and pictures for which he received a hundred pounds with difficulty, now sell for thousands; while the "pretty" landscapes gradually decrease in value.

Then there is David Cox—another instance of the scales falling from ignorant eyes too late to be of service to the man who ought to have been benefited. Are these signs that a real knowledge of art is arising amongst the purchasers of pictures? I fear not. I think I see proofs of the influence of fashion in all the exhibitions of the present day—glaring mistakes of eccentricity for genius, a hunger after novelty, and a "casting of bread upon the waters"—in the form of purchases of works by young aspirants, in whom the purchaser thinks he sees signs of power to be fully developed in the near future, which will greatly increase the value of his investment. What we pray for—and pray in vain—is that the public for whom we work should

be able to judge truly our merits and defects, and act according to knowledge, uninfluenced by fashion or critical opinion.

I append a list of David Cox's works, with their varying prices, as it so fully illustrates my remarks :

[Copy.]

David Cox's Pictures.—The story of David Cox's prices, and those afterwards obtained for the same pictures, is one of striking contrasts. The highest price he *ever* received for a picture, and that on one single occasion only, was £100 ; in another case he had £95 ; his average prices for large pictures were under, rather than over, £50 apiece *in his best days*. The "Seashore at Rhyl," for which he received £100, has been since sold for £2,300 ; the "Vale of Clwyd," for which he accepted £95, brought £2,500. Two pictures, for which he received £40 each in 1847, were sold in 1872 for £1,575 and £1,550 respectively. Two others at £40 each have sold since for £2,300 and £2,315 5s. respectively. The most extraordinary case is that of "Peace and War"—a harvest-field scene, with troops marching towards Lancaster. Cox presented this to a friend, a clergyman. This gentleman became subsequently in want of funds, and asked Cox if he would mind if he sold it. The artist bought his present back for £20. It was sold a few years since for £3,601 10s.—*Leisure Hour.*

CHAPTER XX.

A STORY OF A SNOWY NIGHT.

SEVERE snowstorms in London are exceptional; and that of Tuesday, January 18, 1881, was perhaps the most furious on record. I was engaged to dine with Sir F. Leighton, and I made a fruitless attempt to breast the storm down Westbourne Grove in search of a conveyance. I could make no way against the snow-laden wind, which drove me back before I had gone many steps from my own door. There was nothing for it but to wait for a passing cab, and, by good fortune, I secured one; and, after a fearful journey, I arrived at the President's, to find that what had been intended for a large dinner-party had diminished to a collection of five or six weather-beaten guests.

For many years I was a member of two clubs—the Athenæum and the Garrick. As I had the honour to be elected by the committee into the former, and as it was, and is, occasionally useful to me, I have retained my membership; but I withdrew my name from the Garrick some years ago. I think it was on the occasion of dining there with

a friend soon after the dreadful Tuesday before mentioned that a relatable circumstance occurred.

My friend and I had not long been seated, when our talk turned upon the snowstorm and its probable effects upon the theatres and other places of amusement, which must remain open however disastrously they may be affected by the weather.

"Yes," said my friend. "From the difficulty of locomotion, some of the audiences must have been distinguished by their smallness. That at the Bancrofts' in the Haymarket was scanty enough; for I have been told on good authority that when the manager took a survey through the usual opening, there were about eight people in the stalls, very few in the gallery, and fewer still in the boxes—so miserable an audience, in fact, that when the condition of affairs was announced to the actors, they all exclaimed that they felt it would be impossible to do justice to a long performance with such a wretched assemblage in front of them. What was to be done? After consultation, it was resolved that Mr. Bancroft should address his visitors, and give a candid description of the feelings of his company. This he proceeded to carry into effect in something like the following words:

"'LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

"'I am desired by my colleagues in the theatre to express our gratitude to you for braving this dreadful weather in making your appearance here to-night. I am sure it is not necessary for me

to impress upon you that the sympathy and applause of an audience are what I may call the breath of life to an actor. Without these his efforts are tame and spiritless; in short, we all feel that the desolate appearance of the theatre, by reason of the smallness of your numbers, would paralyze our efforts, and we should neither please you nor satisfy ourselves. Under these circumstances, I venture to ask your indulgence, and I beg you to allow me to return you the money you have paid for your places, and to express the hope that you will come and see us another night.'

"A faint sprinkle of applause followed the manager as he retired, and the audience slowly dispersed. A few evidences of disapproval were heard from the gallery, but the majority left in silence.

"'Are they all gone?' said Mrs. Bancroft.

"'I think so,' replied her husband. 'I will give them time to clear out, and then look again.'

"This was done, and the manager returned to the green-room looking somewhat aghast.

"'Every part of the theatre is clear,' said he, 'except the stalls, in which there sits a stolid, obstinate-looking man, with two young ladies.'

"'What is to be done?" exclaimed Mrs. Bancroft. "Suppose he insists, and we have to go through the whole play for them?'

"A chorus of 'Impossible!' was raised by the company. After a pause, the manager said:

"'I have an idea. I will go and talk to them.'

"The idea took the following shape :

"'Sir,' said Mr. Bancroft, stepping towards the footlights, 'you see that all the audience but yourselves have kindly accepted my proposition. Am I so unfortunate as not to be able to persuade you to follow their example? If we felt it impossible to do justice to our play when the theatre was partly filled, it must be evident to you that it is even more impossible—if I may use the expression—now.'

"'Sir,' said the stranger, 'I am but just returned from India, and have not been in a London theatre for many years. These young ladies are my daughters; they tell me you are Mr. Bancroft, and though I am very anxious to see you act, I will willingly follow the example of the rest of the audience and leave the theatre, if you will provide me with the means of reaching Roehampton, where I live. My carriage has gone ; and my coachman has orders not to come for us until eleven. There are no conveyances to be had in the streets. What are we to do?—where are we to go till then?'

"'Now for my idea,' thought Bancroft :

"'Have you or your daughters ever been behind the scenes in a theatre, sir?'

"'Never!' was the reply. 'Not many theatres in India, you know.'

"'Perhaps the sight might amuse the young ladies ; and if you will do me the honour to accept Mrs. Bancroft's and my invitation to some slight refreshment, I think we could entertain you in various ways till your carriage comes. We have in our

company Mr. Arthur Cecil, who sings delightfully; one or two others skilled in imitations and recitations—if you consent, we will do our best to amuse you.'

"'Oh do, papa!' exclaimed the ladies; 'we should so love to see what it is like behind the scenes!'

"After some hesitation, and reflection on the extreme difficulty of the situation, the gentleman somewhat ungraciously consented, and was conducted to the green-room and introduced to the company. The young ladies were delighted with the novelty of their surroundings. The time passed merrily away. Cecil sang often, and delightfully; others contributed their share to the improvised entertainment; and soon after ten a light supper and champagne, with talk, more or less brilliant, filled up the time till the Indian gentleman's carriage was announced.

"'Sir,' said he, as he handed his card to Mr. Bancroft, 'whether I should have enjoyed the evening more if I had seen the play I cannot tell; as it is, I must thank you for one of the pleasantest I ever spent; and I hope you will do me the honour to come and see me when next you find yourself in Rochampton.'

"As I told you," said my friend, as he concluded this story, "I had *that* from very reliable authority. You may depend upon the truth of it."

Mr. Arthur Cecil is a member of the Garrick Club, and, curiously enough, he came up to the

table where my friend and I were dining just as the story of the snowy night was finished.

"Cecil," said I, after the usual greeting, "I have just heard from my friend here of your adventure the other night at the Haymarket."

"What adventure was that?" said Cecil.

I rapidly repeated the story, to which the actor listened attentively.

"That's not bad!" said Cecil; "*but there isn't a word of truth in it.*"

CHAPTER XXI.

ENGLISH ART AND FRENCH INFLUENCE.

Over one of the doors in the great International Exhibition in Paris, which took place in 1868, were written the words "*Ecole Britannique.*"

Some French painters—young ones, I think—were heard to express surprise at the words "*Ecole Britannique,*" as they declared to one another that England did not possess a school of art at all. There were painters in England, no doubt, but each went his own way, the result being a medley of poor stuff unworthy the name of a "school." Whether those gentlemen changed their opinions after an examination of the English pictures, I have no means of knowing; but there is little doubt that many of the French artists who "came to scoff remained to pray;" and from 1868 an English school of art was acknowledged by the most prominent artistic minds of France. The English school is of modern growth. Until Reynolds arose, to be speedily followed by Gainsborough and other giants of those days, there was nothing approaching to what is called a school of art in this country.

Hogarth was, *sui generis*, unapproachable and inimitable; he had blazed across the art firmament, and disappeared before Reynolds attained his zenith; and up to the early part of the present century few men of sufficient mark appeared to warrant English art claiming the right to be considered a school. Most of the great pictures of the world owe their origin to sacred or profane history; from the former the old masters derived their inspiration, their patron being the Catholic Church; from the latter, great works were commissioned and paid for by crowned heads, or societies whose public buildings offered opportunities to artists which are denied to them in this country. Historical painting in England, from the contemporaries of Reynolds down to Haydon and Hilton, has been disastrous to its professors, and generally to those bold enough to encourage them. There is simply no demand; and whether demand would create supply may be said to be very doubtful, since the opportunity offered in 1842 by the decoration of the Houses of Parliament—and embraced by some of the best painters of that time—was fruitful in examples of incapacity for dealing with the higher branches of the art. I am fully persuaded that history painting, even when practised by a master-hand, would find no support in England; few houses are large enough to contain works of the scale that history painters affect, and still fewer are the purchasers who have the desire—bred of taste and knowledge—sufficiently strong to induce them to patronize historical or sacred pictures at all. So far,

then, as the highest art, or what is generally called such, is concerned, we cannot claim it as a component part of the British School. France, with its Church and Government patronage, has the advantage of us. Of what, then, is the British School, if there be one, composed?

As my memory goes back to my early days, what brilliant names, what admirable works, suggest themselves! those men and pictures being the successors of others scarcely less remarkable. Lawrence had died, and high excellence in portraiture had died with him, to rise again in even increased splendour under the hands of the distinguished men of the present day. The historical painters, reduced to Hilton and Haydon, with a few feeble satellites flickering about them, showed spasmodically in our annual exhibitions. Poor Haydon's failure to arouse sympathy for "high art" caused his melancholy death. Hilton's unsold—and in many instances admirable—works filled one of the rooms in Trafalgar Square, where necessity compelled their author to accept an office in the service of the Academy.

To establish our claim to be classed as a school, I fall back on landscape as practised by Turner, Constable, Collins, Creswick, Callcott, Lee, Linnell, Roberts, Stanfield, and others less powerful. In animal painting, Landseer stood alone, superior to all in this country or any other. Wilkie, Mulready, the elder Leslie, and Webster, may be classed as painters of *genre* of the highest excellence. Numbers of young men—amongst whom I claim a place—modestly, and with-

out an approach to servile imitation, followed in their footsteps.

There were a few eminent men, notably Maclise and Ward, who sought and found subjects in the by-ways of history, in which each artist proved his individuality by his method of treatment, and found purchasers who were incompetent to appreciate the drier examples of historical art.

For many years Etty was unable to sell pictures which, while strong in individual feeling, possessed many of the merits of the Venetian School. The classic and sometimes poetical character of the themes puzzled John Bull and failed to open his purse, until a fashion for Etty's works arose a year or two before the painter's death, when all his unsold pictures sold for high prices, and a man who had been very poor all his happy life retired to York, his native place, with a fortune of twenty thousand pounds. The bounds within which I must confine myself prevent me speaking of men still living; but I may say that many of them are faithful to the old and true traditions—intensely individual—each practising his art, undeterred by false and foolish criticism, according to his lights, from which he cannot be drawn away by the crazes of eccentricity or "impressionism."

I have proved to my own satisfaction, and I hope to that of my reader, that if brilliant powers, heaven-gifted to each man, and exercised with thorough conscientiousness, can be said to form—in their infinite variety—a British School, then we may boast

of one that may well hold its own amongst the foreigners, of whatever nationality. This chapter would not have been written if I did not see—or think I see—signs of French influence in the works of the remarkably able young men who are destined to take our places—influences which, if intensified and persisted in, will eventually affect the practice of art in England until it will be difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish it from that of France.

The art education that produced the distinguished men whose names I have recorded may require changes; but if these are to take the form of slovenly execution, together with obscurity that amounts to a foggy blackness, and subjects either trifling or ugly, then I think no case has been made out against our system of teaching. "Impressionism," in which neither drawing, colouring, nor truth in any form appears, I pass by with the contempt it merits. Each of our annual exhibitions shows an increase of French influence, and in the one of this present year of grace, 1888, the evidences are stronger than I have ever seen them before.

The next intrusion we may expect will probably be in the shape of examples of French *taste*—such as disfigure every display at the Salon—in which the painter has sought, and found, inspiration in the orgies of masqueraders, or in the lowest slums of Paris. There are nudities and nudities, and in no other form of art is the individuality of the painter's mind more in evidence. Heaven save us from nakedness, according to the French!

Every year there is an exhibition in London of foreign art, comprising that of many countries, carefully selected by Mr. Wallis ; dinginess of treatment, affectation of all kinds, and offensive nudity, being excluded. Let the student never fail to betake himself to the French Gallery in Pall Mall, where he will find proper matter for his emulation. Foreign artists frequently expend delightful skill on subjects so trifling as to be unworthy of being painted at all, but there is no necessity for imitating them in that respect. Let the tyro, and for that matter the more established painter also, study the perfect drawing of every part, the scrupulous care that refuses to be satisfied without the absolute completion of every detail, and he will then discover that either from his own fault or the imperfection of his teaching, he is denied the power of rivalling his brethren from abroad. As it is, he reproduces French faults with fatal accuracy, and shuts his eyes to the accomplishments in which he notoriously fails.

Though, as I have said before, considering the result of art-education in this country, as shown in the works of the founders of the English School—nearly all of whom were indebted for their education to the Royal Academy—we should be unreasonable to complain of the teaching, I must qualify my observations by admitting that these men may have become great in spite of it ; and I must also acknowledge that, as there are many instances of otherwise great works being disfigured by imperfect drawing, that serious drawback may not unfairly be

charged against faulty training; and I am, therefore, free to confess that I think the system of education at the Royal Academy might be much improved. My feeling in this matter is shared by many of my brother Academicians, and we are at this time in conclave assembled to consider school reform amongst many others.

I think there can be no doubt that the plan of education adopted by the old masters—that of apprenticeship for a number of years to some great artist—was the true way. The pupil was forced to follow his master's directions on pain of instant dismissal. He had the example of the illustrious teacher always before him, and if in some cases the system led to attempts at imitation, that pernicious habit was corrected, and the result in every instance—unless nature intervened in the form of inaptness or want of the necessary gift—was the production of an artist whose works are immortal.

I fear it is impossible in England to adopt the French system of the large *atelier* presided over by one or two distinguished artists. Instead of that method of teaching, by which the student is directed by one man and always on the same principles, we have in our Royal Academy teachers (Academicians and Associates) succeeding each other every month, each inculcating his favourite method, one perhaps at variance with that of his successor in the following month; the effect being, in my opinion, confusion and bewilderment to the student. When this has been discussed amongst us, it has been urged that

the clever student will listen to such varying advice and derive benefit from the differences in it; while the stupid student who is bewildered will never make an artist at all. But we have to consider results, and there can be no question that the French student draws better, and is more generally accomplished in his art, than the English one; and it behoves us to find out the reason, and mend our method. This should be done, and may be done without importing the bad qualities of French art into the English School, a danger which is so imminent at the present moment. Let the student study the best examples of the English painters, or, what is better, the great masters on which they are founded; and while taking full advantage of the best training, whether in France or elsewhere, let him always remember that he is an Englishman, and endeavour to produce pictures which—unlike some of those by French-taught men—cannot be mistaken for foreign work.

CHAPTER XXII.

IGNORANCE OF ART.

I FEAR it cannot be denied that the British public is *en masse* densely ignorant of what constitutes the beauties and the faults of pictures, and other works of art. Amongst the "many headed" there are many admirers and even lovers of art, as the number of collections of pictures all over the country sufficiently proves; but can one of these gatherings be found in which hideous blots, in the shape of the worst of bad pictures, do not go far to convince the artist spectator that if the collector really felt the beauty of some of his treasures he would be unable to endure—and would at once banish from his walls—specimens of artistic incompetence, in which vulgarity and commonplace struggle for mastery? In my long experience I have met with a great variety of the picture-buying class; some examples puzzling in the extreme—puzzling because the connoisseur, though conscious of his utter ignorance of art, takes no opinion but his own, invests large sums in old masters perhaps, and takes the consequences. I give the following example:

Many years ago my medical man—on the occasion of a visit to my family—asked me if I should like to see a very fine collection of old masters. He received the inevitable answer, and in a few minutes I found myself in his carriage on my way to the Temple.

"My friend," said the doctor, "is a barrister—I fancy a briefless one; a great lover of ancient art, in which he has invested all, or nearly all, his fortune. His rooms, as you will see, are terribly overcrowded, and I fancy he will be compelled to sell some of his pictures, by which he will make large profits, as they are all not only original, but the finest specimens of each master."

"Any modern pictures amongst them?" I asked.

"Oh no! His taste is altogether for the old masters; in fact, to be candid, he thinks modern painting miserable stuff."

The great collector was a handsome young man of distinguished manners, living in very large chambers. Pictures everywhere; not an inch of wall to be seen. Five or six easels, each supporting a Raphael, a Titian, or a Velasquez; smaller gems lying on tables and standing against other pictures. I confess the first sight staggered me; the whole effect was one of a kind of spurious splendour, which an examination of its component parts speedily changed into something else.

"I am always glad to see a modern painter here," said the barrister; "a study of such works as these would, I think, greatly tend to the improvement of

the English school. I am sure, Mr. Frith, you agree with me in thinking we have no living man whose work is to be compared with the great old men—the old lamps as I call them. How glad I should be if you gentlemen would take those lights for your guides!"

I proceeded to look at the "old lamps," and very soon found myself mentally quoting Macbeth:

"This is a sorry sight."

The confidence of the collector made him perfectly indifferent to opinion—to my opinion, at any rate, for he placed me before an easel on which was an entombment by Rembrandt—a very large canvas containing many figures, but without a trace of Rembrandt, or of anything but what was contemptibly bad. He then read me a lesson, taking the picture's supposititious merits for his text. I was thankful that my opinion was of no value in the eyes of this great expert.

"This magnificent Rembrandt," said the owner, "was formerly in the possession of the Burgomaster Six at Amsterdam. He had a quarrel with the artist, as you are no doubt aware, and in a moment of pique, he—most fortunately for me—sold the picture. Ultimately it found its way to England, and, in course of time, into the possession of Mr. ——" (naming a well-known dealer in old pictures long since dead), "from whom I bought it for the absurdly small sum of three thousand pounds. The National Gallery will, I think, eventually possess this work,

which is of a higher quality than any Rembrandt in that collection, where, by-the-bye, there are many copies. Here you have a Titian, which for purity of design, brilliancy of colouring——" and so on throughout the whole dreadful display of astounding proofs of the utter ignorance of this swindled man.

In the whole of the enormous collection there were four or five small original Dutch pictures—I forget the names of the painters; the pictures were not of first-rate quality, but they were genuine.

The visit was over, and as we drove away I gave my doctor my opinion of his friend's treasures.

"What is the matter?" said I, seeing him turn very white.

"Matter—oh, nothing! but do you consider yourself a good judge of old pictures?"

"Well, I know what I like; and I don't like your friend's old pictures, many of them being nearly as modern as my own."

"But do you really mean to say that they are of no value?"

"I mean to say that if they were sent for sale by auction the whole lot wouldn't fetch five hundred pounds."

"Great Heaven! and I have lent him twelve hundred pounds on that Rembrandt."

This made matters very serious. Said I: "Now my dear J——, I may be mistaken; go to Mr. Farrer, who lives in Wardour Street, who knows so much about old masters that his opinion is constantly asked, paid for, and considered conclusive;

his charge, I believe, is one guinea for a single picture, and ten for a collection. Go to him, get his opinion, which I tell you will certainly coincide with mine, even to the sum I name as the value of the whole."

This was done. The barrister was a ruined man; my doctor lost his money; the whole collection was sold at Phillips's, and fetched between four and five hundred pounds.

Such a gigantic swindle as the above is very rare when modern work is concerned, and then only when a collector relies on his own judgment, instead of on that of a man who has the knowledge required to form a correct opinion. It is within my experience to have become acquainted with what are called "self-made" men who, either from a fancy for pictures, or with a view to an investment of their money, have become picture buyers. The care these people take to acquaint themselves with the solidity of ordinary investments is very great; they make every kind of inquiry before they take shares in projects, however alluring. They know they know nothing about such and such a railway, or of a mine which promises a hundred per cent., and nothing can exceed the caution with which they test evidence of the character of such securities, before they will trust to them.

But works of art! Oh, that is quite another matter. "Anybody can judge of pictures!" These wiseacres don't want Mr. A.'s or Mr. B.'s opinion, though each of those men may have spent the whole of his life in close intimacy with the finest examples

of modern art. The root of this is blatant conceit, for the indulgence of which the modern collector often pays very dearly.

These gentlemen are past praying for; conceit and ignorance blind them to beauties and defects. The glamour of a name, and press praise, are all some men require to induce them to buy works in which, if they spoke the truth, they would acknowledge that they find no satisfaction. But the wonder of all is the downright vulgarian, who sometimes astonishes us in h-less English by his desire to collect works of art; he has risen from the gutter to the stucco palace, and he must pose as a connoisseur. He does not care for size or subject, he wants a specimen—a *speciment*, I think it was; he don't know nothing about pictures, but the 'ouse must be furnished. Mrs. G. don't care for pictures, but he says, says he: "Black, the butterman, which rose from nothink, has got a lot, and why shouldn't we?"

"Long, long ago" I painted a picture for this worthy. He hailed from a considerable town in the South of England, and on receipt of the picture he wrote to me somewhat as follows:

"Picture has come all right, we think it uncommon good, a real tip-topper. You want a lot for it, though. Well, make it pounds instead of guineas (there's no guineas now you know), and I'll say done with you. Me and my friend Smith is coming to London; a real superior man is Smith, I can tell you. You'll like him, a great talker he is. You

come and have a chop with us at the Great Western, Tuesday next, six sharp, and then I'll settle for the picture."

Tuesday came, and my patron and his friend with it. Mr. Smith was a very superior person to his companion, so much so as to cause wonder in my mind at their apparent intimacy. Dinner was finished, and Mr. G. produced his cheque-book.

"Now then," said he, "let's settle for the tarblue; six hundred pounds, ain't it?"

"No," said I, "six hundred guineas."

"Guineas! what did I say in my letter? there's no guineas now."

"No," said I, "you are right, there are no guineas now; I made a mistake, six hundred and thirty pounds, please."

"There, Smith, what do you think of that? he's a sharp 'un, ain't he? Well, 'ere you are."

The cheque was handed to me, and the conversation became general, Mr. Smith proving a pleasant, well-informed man; Mr. G., for the most part, being only a listener. In a pause, which was becoming embarrassing, Mr. Smith inquired after the health of a certain Mr. Sylvester.

"Oh, he is getting all right!" said my patron; "he began to mend directly after he got rid of his morality."

"Mend after he got rid of his morality!" exclaimed Mr. Smith.

"Yes; his wife never liked it."

"His wife never liked his morality!' echoed the astonished Smith.

"No; it was nothing but a trouble to both of 'em. You see, he was always athinking about it; it was a drawback to everything—hampered him in his business. He is in the timber line, you know."

"Well, upon my life," said Smith, "this is astonishing. I have always heard Sylvester spoken of as a most respectable tradesman, and in all respects a moral man."

"Who said he wasn't?"

"You did!'

"I never said nothing of the sort, and I call the painter to witness—what I say is his may-or-rolity never suited him nor his missis. They wasn't up to it—with the dinners and that. I'll swear I never said Sylvester wasn't a moral man. I know *'e his*" (with great energy).

"Sylvester was Mayor last year, I know," said Mr. Smith. "Do you mean he never liked his *mayoralty?*"

"Why, what else can I mean? That's what I said all along!"

My memory is very good, and I can assure my reader that the above occurred, word for word, as I have told it. Mr. G. formed a very considerable collection of pictures, and proved a kind and liberal patron. He is dead—"Peace to his ashes."

CHAPTER XXIII.

ORATORY.

According to the great Duke of Wellington, whose advice was asked by a young member of Parliament ambitious of shining as a speaker, three qualifications are necessary for success, namely: brevity, clear knowledge of subject, and absence of Latin quotation. It cannot be denied, I think, that the Duke showed his usual good sense in giving this advice; but I submit that a man may be in possession of every detail necessary for the elucidation of his theme—he may be determined to be brief and to quote no Latin, and yet fail utterly as a speaker; he rises, his knees knock against each other, he is as white as a sheet, and after uttering a few incoherent words his mind becomes a blank; and he sits down covered with confusion and shame.

Lockhart, son-in-law to Sir Walter Scott, was a notable example of the veto which nature sometimes places upon the would-be orator. Lockhart, as everybody knows, was highly accomplished, cultured to the last degree, and qualified to master almost any subject proposed to him. He began life as a barrister,

practising in Edinburgh, and he failed utterly, because the moment he rose to address a jury he became nervous, bewildered, and unable to utter a dozen consecutive words. This was fatal; and a career at the bar had to be abandoned. Another calling was found for him in London, where it is needless to remind my reader that he became distinguished by literary work of a high character. Before Lockhart left Edinburgh a public dinner was given to him, and his health was proposed in the usual glowing terms; tremendous cheering greeted the guest of the evening when he rose to reply.

"If," Lockhart is reported to have said, "I had possessed the power of public speech, and if I could have responded in—in appropriate language to this toast of my health and prosperity, the toast would not have been proposed under the present circumstances—that's clear—so I must content myself with simply thanking you all, which I do with all my heart."

This is said to have been the longest and the last public utterance of J. G. Lockhart.

Take the artist class *en bloc* in this country, and you will find only one orator amongst them, and very few public speakers. My experience of my profession teaches me that the art of painting in its higher achievements and the art of speaking not only do not go together, but are generally in exact opposition; and it was "ever thus from childhood's hour," so far as I have observed.

I confess I have suffered pangs of envy when I

have seen a man—whose art, rightly or wrongly, I heartily despised—rise, and with perfect self-possession, in admirably chosen phrases, hold forth for half an hour on some art matter in which his prejudice and ignorance fought for supremacy. I have really felt I would almost consent to paint as badly as, I think, you do, my friend, if I could but speak as well. I hope it will not be thought that because I cannot make a speech I am supposing myself able to paint a good picture; but my experience of nearly all the greatest painters I have known, or heard of, convinces me that they either made themselves ridiculous by attempts at oratory, or—as at our general assemblies—sat as silent as owls. I am convinced that self-confidence, with a strong admixture of conceit and a nervous temperament under complete control, are main necessities to the public speaker.

A distinguished gentleman of my acquaintance had accepted an invitation to a great City dinner; he was inexperienced and somewhat frightened. "I wish," said he to a literary friend, "you would just jot down a few lines—make them as short as you can, and I'll learn them by heart." This was done, and my would-be orator joined a party of friends—the speech-writer being one—who spent the day at Epsom, and in the intervals of racing, the little speech was so often tossed from mouth to mouth, that the whole party became letter-perfect in it. "Now, dear boy, once more," said the author of the speech, and again the intended speaker

delivered his words with accuracy and appropriate action.

The great dinner at the Goldsmiths' or the Fishmongers' was given on the evening of the Derby Day. The all-important moment arrived—my friend arose, and was received with thunders of applause. The cheers ceased ; and, amidst a silence that seemed awful, he said :

"Er—er—Mr. Prime Warden and gentlemen, having—er—expressed as well as I am willing—eh ! by Jove! I've begun at the end! Well"—loud cheers—"as I was saying, I beg to assure you that after the kindness with which you have listened to the few remarks I have ventured to introduce to your notice, I—er—I really forget. Well—I will resume my seat." (Cheers.)

The feat just related was not the performance of an artist, but of a gentleman who now speaks frequently in public ; and, I am bound to say, speaks very well.

The Presidents of the Royal Academy should be great painters and great speakers ; that they have scarcely ever combined those essentials seems to go some way to prove my postulate. Sir Joshua Reynolds had literary power, as his discourses prove ; but he had no pretension as a speaker. His successor, West, blushed and stammered when he attempted to address his brother members or the students. Sir Thomas Lawrence, admirable artist as he was, had no power as an orator ; he always read an address to the students at the distribution of

medals, which proved nothing beyond his incapability of writing it properly. Lawrence died; then came Shee—poet, playwright, orator, and wit, and—I fear I must add—indifferent painter.

When it is made clear that in 1830, the year of President Lawrence's death, most of the men who reflect the greatest glory on the British school—amongst whom were Turner, Wilkie, Landseer, Leslie, Constable, Collins, Callcott, and others—were in the meridian of their powers, and it was found necessary to choose Sir Martin Shee in preference to any of them (he being vastly their inferior as an artist), I think I have shown that great painting and great talking seldom go hand in hand together.

Of Sir Martin Shee's presidency I saw but little. I tried for a medal in the painting-school in the year 1839, and I was one amongst the students at the distribution of the prizes, in high hope of being a winner; and it was from Sir Martin's lips that I heard that both first and second medals had been bestowed upon my rivals. Bitter was my disappointment at the time—laughable it appears to me now. When the race for success began in earnest, I soon distanced my competitors. Within a few years of that time I was an Associate, an honour that one of the prize-winners never reached at all, and the other only many years afterwards, when I had the pleasure of voting for him.

Sir Martin Shee became a confirmed invalid, and lived for some years at Brighton. Mr. Jones, R.A., during that time—indeed, until Sir Martin's death—

performed all the duties of the President. The suffrages of the Academicians after the death of Shee gave Mr. Eastlake a satisfactory majority; and in that gentleman I think we find combined, for the first time in the history of the institution, the two qualities of successful art and successful oratory.

Eastlake's art may be out of fashion now; and where is the art that has not suffered from the caprice of fashion? But he painted many beautiful pictures, and he was, in every sense of the word, a most accomplished artist. His "Christ Weeping over Jerusalem," and his "Gaston de Foix before the Battle of Ravenna," and many other works, will hold their own when most of the fashionable art of to-day will be forgotten.

Eastlake's speeches were learned, eloquent, and—what was a great comfort—never too long. They somewhat lacked the brilliancy to which we are accustomed at the annual dinners now, and there was an air of studied preparation which was not so skilfully hidden as it is in the hands of Sir Frederick Leighton; but it was oratory, and not simple speech-making; and it richly deserved the compliments that were often paid to it by those who knew best what true oratory meant.

Eastlake was a man of a somewhat cold and reserved manner, self-contained and dignified; but, on the whole, very popular with his brother members. His conduct in the chair, whether at the banquet or the council table, left nothing to be desired.

For "dear old Grant," as we always called him,

every member of the Academy—except, perhaps, an envious portrait-painter, who shall be nameless—had the warmest affection. To know him was to love him; but our affection could not blind us to the fact of his being no orator. Still, he never stammered, much less broke down, in his speeches on that truly trying occasion—the annual banquet. There was a rollicking, fox-hunting kind of flavour about his speeches; he leapt over art questions, and just shook his whip at the students, or at the shortcomings of exhibitors. The whole thing seemed a joke—sometimes, I think, a little undignified.

The face of the envious old portrait-painter was a "sight to see" when Grant was speaking. I sat next to him at the banquet on one occasion when Grant was more jovial than usual. "It is sad to listen to such stuff as that, sir. I hope when you fill that chair you will acquit yourself better than that unfortunate man."

I will here relate an incident told me by Creswick, A.R.A., in which my envious friend figures. An election of an Academician was imminent, when Creswick met the great R.A. in Oxford Street.

"I am glad to meet you, sir," said Mr. Envious. "Are you in a hurry? If not, would you mind walking a little way with me? I desire to have a little conversation with you respecting the approaching election at the Academy."

Now, as Creswick was an Associate eligible and eager for election into the higher rank, he was not in a hurry; and, if he had been so, his hurry would

assuredly have been made to wait, when a proposal was made to talk over the election ; for, of course, Creswick believed that his own promotion was uppermost in Mr. Envious's mind.

"Sir," said the veteran R.A., "do you think Grant has a chance ?"

"Why, yes, sir, I do," replied Creswick. "You see, he has been a long time an Associate, and——"

"Sir," interrupted the old portrait-painter, "he does not deserve to have a chance. Why, sir, he is not an artist at all ; he is but an amateur, and a d——d bad one. We must combine, sir—combine, and prevent anything so scandalous ; he has no mind, sir—no mind. When you see his portraits—as my friend Byron says :

"'You start, for soul is wanting there.'

I hope you will join me and others in our opposition to an election which would disgrace the Academy. I do hope, sir, that I may count upon your vote."

"My vote, Mr. Envious!" stammered Creswick. "You are making a mistake ; I——"

"I trust not, sir," said Envious. "You have a sacred duty to perform ; I thought I had impressed you. I hope I have made no mistake in counting upon your vote ?"

"The mistake you have made," said Creswick, "is in supposing I have a vote."

"A mistake! No vote! Good heavens! why, so it is! You are only an Associate. I wish you good-

day, sir;" and Mr. Envious went one way, and Creswick another.

This little story did not surprise me, for I had had an experience of the old gentleman's love for Grant and his works. On one of the varnishing days I was employed in painting some small figures into a landscape of Creswick's, next to which hung a slight but beautiful sketch of Mrs. Grant by her husband. I can give no idea of the intensity of the scorn and contempt with which old Envious said, pointing to the sketch:

"Can't you do something to that thing, sir, to prevent its disgracing the room as it does at present?"

I now return to my oratorical experiences. I am loath to speak of living men, but I must break through my rule in favour of the second and most incontrovertible proof that great artistic and oratorical powers are sometimes, though so seldom, combined. Sir Frederick Leighton is altogether an exceptional instance of the union of the two powers. Natural gifts, and extreme cultivation of every faculty, have produced the most perfect President of the Royal Academy that we have seen in the past, or are likely to see in the future. Of his qualities as an artist, it is not necessary for me to speak; of his extraordinary powers as an orator, everybody can judge; but of his thoroughly common-sense business habits in presiding over the affairs of the Academy, of his constant courtesy in the chair, and last, not least, of his command of what he declares to be an irritable temper,

I am in a position to speak with great admiration. Often have I seen that temper sorely tried—sometimes, I fear, I have tried it myself—but never yet in a single instance have I, or any other member, heard a harsh word or an angry retort from our President and chairman. No; he will listen for any length of time to arguments that shrink into nothing at the touch of common-sense; to wearying platitudes, in which an R.A. contradicts everybody, including himself; or to pert flippancy from someone who has never thoroughly considered the matter in question, until everybody but the President is wearied to death.

Amongst other instances of academic oratory, that of Gibson, the famous sculptor, occurs to me. Gibson's home was in Italy; we therefore seldom saw him at Academy meetings. Without any pretension to be considered an orator, he was a constant speaker upon any, and nearly every, subject. Gibson was peculiar, and so were his speeches, the word "yes" appearing in them with ludicrous frequency. His speeches always began with "Yes!" and he would then go on to say, "It seems to me, Mr. President—yes—that the matter under discussion deserves serious consideration—yes—and the more I dwell upon it—yes—the more strongly I venture to think the member who has brought it to our notice deserves our thanks—yes;" and so on for half an hour. Someone, I forget who it was, counted the "yeses" in a speech of Gibson's, and the word had occurred thirty-three times. Gibson died, but the

"yeses" did not die with him, for in a letter to the Academy, read to us after his death, in which he announced his intention of leaving his works to the Academy (now the Gibson Gallery at Burlington House), he said:

"I venture to think" (a favourite expression) "that a study of my works by the students will be of service to them in their progress—yes; and I venture to think that my long experience warrants my offering this opinion—yes," etc.

When this letter was read by Knight, our then secretary, who was something of a wag, I, in common with others, thought the "yes" was an interpolation by Knight; but no, I saw the letter, which still exists, and there were the "yeses." I don't think Gibson could have had the same opportunity for the cultivation of his mind that our present President possessed, for on speaking to me of the different incidents in my picture of the "Railway Station" he called them *incidencies;* and he also told me that I was indebted to the Greeks, or the *Grecks*, as he called them, for the power to group the figures.

The solitary speech—if it could be called a speech—of one eminent old Academician was delivered on the occasion of a proposal by some radical spirit which was intended to effect a serious change in our constitution. "If," said the veteran R.A., "this proposal is carried into effect, I propose that three more letters shall be added to the title of R.A., and that they shall be A.S.S."

I will bring this wearisome chapter to a close with

a few words of advice to young painters. Remember poor Haydon; take warning by him, and leave speaking, and above all, writing, to those whose business it may be to speak or write. Remember that it is with your brush you should speak, and if you cannot be eloquent with that, all the talking and writing in the world will not help you; but in all probability create for you innumerable enemies.

CHAPTER XXIV.

SUPPOSITITIOUS PICTURES.

I HAVE already remarked upon the great number of letters that the publication of my Autobiography has brought upon me, many of them containing suggestions of subjects for pictures, and others displaying a confusion of mind in the writers which is unique in my experience. By what extraordinary mental condition a man can persuade himself that a picture in his possession is painted by me because he has read my "Reminiscences" exceeds my comprehension; nor should I believe in the existence of such a person if I had not convincing proof of it in several instances. I have always replied to these curious documents; and when a picture has been described to me, the subject of which I know I should never have had the courage to attempt, I have avoided the sight of it. In other cases, when I have been less certain, the pictures have been sent to me, because it appeared possible—from a resemblance to the themes I have ordinarily treated—that the owner had a shadow of reason for their attribution to me; but with a similarity of subject the resemblance ended;

for the rendering had in every case, I flatter myself, no resemblance to my way of working. Nor has it been in the least degree flattering to my vanity, to think that I could have been credited with such work at all.

I leave it to the student of mental disorders to explain the phenomenon from which I have suffered.

I must again express my surprise that a fondness for pictures should be allowed to betray anyone into a conviction that he has sufficient knowledge to guide him in his purchases. One gentleman writes that he hopes the picture he sends is original, because he has given a great deal of money for it; it bears my name, and good judges have pronounced it to be genuine. An examination proves, perhaps, that the good judges have been as bad judges as himself.

Then there is the possessor of an original Titian which was taken from Joseph Bonaparte's carriage after one of the Peninsular victories—it was in the Madrid Gallery, and its authenticity has never been doubted. He intends—after allowing me a sight of it—to offer his treasure to the trustees of the National Gallery; he has already been offered so many thousand pounds for it, but it is really worth so many more. The Titian is produced, and proves to be a bad copy of a well-known Rubens.

Another and a stranger case is that of the individual who possesses an old master which is undoubtedly original, but without a single quality for which the great old masters were distinguished. There was no doubt as great a differ-

ence in the qualities of the works of the ancient painters as there is in those of the moderns; and a bad old master is a fearful production indeed. The subject is nearly always revolting—one that all the charms of art could not redeem—it is black, vilely drawn, and wretchedly coloured, presenting an object that one would think no human being would look at twice. Yet those things have been shown to me as "precious gems" over and over again. And the way their possessors will expatiate on their beauties! A hideous half-length figure, called "Lucretia," by Van Eyck, was brought to me. The owner assured me he had refused many hundred pounds—I forget the exact amount—for it. The picture was of the period of Van Eyck—a fat, wretchedly-drawn, Chinese-looking creature, uglier than sin—about to stab herself with a carving-knife; the whole thing preposterously disagreeable and vile in art. "I can't defend the subject," said the owner to me; "but the tone, sir, the keeping, the chiaroscuro, the drawing of the body and arms—surely all those qualities are there, sir?"

I confess this talk provoked me, and I said:

"The picture is one of the most detestable things I ever beheld; and I cannot understand the nature of the man who could find the slightest pleasure in looking at it."

"You are rather hard upon Van Eyck," said my visitor: "he is not much in your line, I know."

"No," said I. "I wish I were in Van Eyck's 'line,' as you call it; but that thing is no more Van

Eyck than you are, and I advise you not to refuse another offer for it if you can find anybody foolish enough to make one."

"You are outspoken, sir. Well, I mustn't complain; I brought the picture for your opinion."

"And now you have got it," said I, "and I shall be really obliged if you will take your Van Eyck away."

I doubt if the artist exists, or ever did exist, who has not occasionally painted bad pictures. I plead guilty to having painted several. And how sure are these pictorial crimes to haunt their perpetrator! I recall an instance. A picture-dealer in a small way, and without the knowledge that often distinguishes the fraternity, had presented one or two supposititious pictures to me which I had repudiated with scorn. At last he came armed with what he called "the genuine article."

"I was lucky enough to get this at an auction yesterday for a very moderate figure," said he.

"Were you?" said I, prepared to deny all knowledge of his purchase if I could, but I was guilty. "May I ask what you bring it to me for?"

"Thought you might like to see it, and——"

"Well, I don't like to see it, and I wish I had never seen it."

"The woman ain't bad, only she is not pretty enough. Just a few touches more in your present style would make her all right. The man is queer. I think I should take him out altogether; she would be better by herself. I am willing to pay."

"No," said I; "I'm sorry you have given yourself the trouble of bringing the thing to me. I should only spoil it if I were to meddle with it."

Then there is the gentleman collector, who brings a picture which nothing will persuade him is not painted by me.

"But, sir, there is your signature!"

"And very well imitated, too," I reply.

"I was assured," says the connoisseur, "that you had painted this very scene from 'Rob Roy;' no one but yourself could have executed so charming a representation of 'Diana Vernon.'"

"I am glad you like it," say I; "your copy is a very good one, and very like the original."

"Copy! Original!" exclaims the gentleman; "if this is a copy, where is the original?"

"I really can't tell you," is the answer; and the collector goes away fully satisfied that he possesses the original, and that for some inscrutable reason I have repudiated it.

How often do people urge the signature of the artist's name as a proof of originality, as if a forger would not take care to sign his copy to assist in his fraud!

I once experienced a curious instance of credulity. There is a splendid picture by Rembrandt which has been called a "Holy Family," but which is really only a Dutch woman sitting by a cradle in which a child is sleeping. The lighting is from a candle or lamp, so placed as to throw a huge shadow from the female figure on to the wall behind her. Mr.

Lilie, R.A., in his lectures, alludes to the engraving from this remarkable work, and speaks of the original as "lost." A medical friend of mine thought he had found the lost one, and sent it to me, not for my opinion, but for my gratification. I found it to be a copy, and a fairly good one ; but as I could give the owner no clue to the original, and as he had but an indifferent opinion of my judgment, his faith in his picture was not shaken in the least. By a curious accident, when I was hunting for pictures for the Old Masters Exhibition, I found the original Rembrandt in a gentleman's house in Shropshire. It is a magnificent work, and I secured it at once for the exhibition, where it attracted great admiration from everybody but my medical friend, who is now fully persuaded, after what he called a careful examination, that the Shropshire picture is a copy, and that he is the happy possessor of the original. I might multiply examples of supposititious pictures, but I think I have given enough to prove a warning to purchasers not to invest their money in pictures—of the merits and demerits of which they are ignorant—without seeking sounder judgment than their own.

CHAPTER XXV.

A VARIETY OF LETTERS FROM VARIOUS PEOPLE.

In the series which follows, including, as it does, communications from persons celebrated in art and letters, and from others who could, under no circumstances, be distinguished in either, I venture to offer to my readers examples of the sort of correspondence to which an artist is often subjected.

Readers of my published volumes may remember the story of the "Pious Model," who, after a career of turpitude in this country, which culminated in his successful attempt to get money from the credulous for an imaginary wife and child, resigned his position as a model, went to Australia, and established a shop for the sale of religious literature at the Ballarat Diggings.

I here reproduce the letter I received from Mr. Bredman a few years after his establishment at that place:

"Ballarat Diggings, Victoria,
"Oct. 25, 1857.

"Dear Sir,

"I write these few lines to inform you that I am doing very well, together with my wife and

family" (fictitious ones, I imagine.—W. P. F.). "We have a small cottage of our own, and are as comfortable as the climate will allow us to be. We have three seasons in one day here. It will freeze in the night; and then it will be as hot as an oven in the day, with hot winds that blow as if they would tear the earth up sometimes—so violent is the wind sometimes, that it blows great trees down of immense stature—and then it will change to heavy showers of rain for an hour or so, with the wind very strong and violent. But that is not all that a man has to put up with here. You cannot wear a hat without being insulted. Nor, in fact, to be safe from molestation, you must not go anywhere well dressed; for there is a lot of scamps of all nations looking out. But the worst of all countries is the irish and cornish people. For impudence and ignorance there is none equal to them. But there is others as bad; and there is not a week passes without some person or other being shot or otherwise killed, and then plundered of all they have, as the police are not sufficient to protect 50,000 people of all nations and colours. There is only about twenty-one horse-police, and about the same number of foot-police, to protect all the Ballarat Diggings, which is eleven miles across it. There seems nothing but the scum of the earth here. Go where you will, you see nothing but low, blackguard fellows, playing at cards, and cursing and swearing. There is, here and there, a respectable person; but very few and far between. I am selling books about the

Diggings, by which I have made a good living, as *they are mostly good, religious books;* and I have done a great deal of good. We attend the Wesleyan Chapel here twice every Sunday, and have a very good minister, which is a great blessing amongst such WICKEDNESS. If you will be kind enough, sir, to give my best respects to Mr. Savage, Avenue Road, St. John's Wood, and the other gentlemen I have sat to, sir, I should take it as a great favour. I intend to come to England in next March to buy a lot of books, as I find that the cheapest way to buy books, as I can get 2s. here for a book that I can get for 6d. in London. If you would write to me, sir, my address is at the following place :

"JOHN BREDMAN,
"Bookseller, etc.,
"James Dodd's Coffee House,
"Main Road,
"Ballarat Diggings,
"Victoria,
"Australia.

"To be left till called for, as we live here out in the bush, where the postman could not find us.

"I remain,
"Your most obedient humble servant, sir,
"JOHN BREDMAN."

I cannot remember where I read the following example of the sudden efficacy of repentance which is recorded of a notorious sinner, who was killed by a fall from his horse. It was said of him that—

"Between the stirrup and the ground
He mercy asked and mercy found."

A much longer time has been afforded to Mr. Bredman to repent of cheating me out of baby-clothes, which he begged for a child that never existed, and port-wine and money for a sick wife whom he didn't possess.

From the tenor of the foregoing letter, it will be charitable to give my pious friend credit for sincerity in his efforts to convert the Ballarat miners; for myself, I confess I find it very difficult to believe that a long career of hypocrisy successfully practised in this country has not been continued at the Antipodes.

In his quasi-reformed condition, he sat to me ten years ago for one of the figures in the series called the "Road to Ruin;" and, as the exhibition of those pictures called forth the following effusion, it may be appropriately introduced in this place, if it can be appropriately introduced at all. The five pictures which inspired the following were entitled College, Ascot, Arrest, Struggles, and The End. For the information of those of my readers who have not seen the series of pictures in question, I may say that they were intended to set forth the perils of gambling, as shown by the career of a youth who, in the first picture, is seen—surrounded by more or less dissolute companions—gambling the night away in his College rooms. The second scene represents the youth—grown to manhood—in the far more dangerous "Royal Enclosure" at

Ascot, where his ruin is completed. His Arrest in his forfeited ancestral home follows. In the fourth picture his Struggles to maintain himself and his wife and little children are shown by his attempts to write a comedy in his poor lodgings in some foreign town—attempts sadly disturbed by his landlady's appeal for money. Then comes the final picture called The End, when in a squalid garret to which his misfortunes have brought him he commits suicide. My reader will note the introduction of the titles into the poem :

"TO

WILLIAM POWELL FRITH, Esq., R.A.

AN APPEAL,

After a visit to the Royal Academy, 1878.

"O thou whose glorious art such power could give,
To flood with glamour all the canvas o'er,
Till in their five small frames the pictures live,
As surely picture never lived before ;

"Oh, by the Eye that watcheth all who turn
To seek for light in Error's wildered maze ;
By that dear love that ceaseth not to yearn
O'er the lost wanderer from a Father's ways ;

"Oh, call not this the last—not this the end,
Oh, close not thus the reckless, rash career ;
Is there no hand to help—no human friend?
No warning whisper from some higher sphere?

"Oh, teach not, then, Despair—'the end' of life ;
Put forth thy hand, there yet is time to save ;
Not thus should end our struggles and our strife
In the black pit of a dishonoured grave.

"He looks so good, that handsome youth, when first
He meets us in his COLLEGE-days so lightly;
But even now the fatal net accurst
Is spread, the fearless foot to fetter tightly.

"That cloth of green—why choose they innocent green?
Hue of the robe that drapes the Earth's warm breast,
Wherein she folds, from trouble-tempest keen,
Her weary children when they seek her rest.

"The night is past, the holy dawn looks in,
Marking their madness with reproachful eye;
'Out, out, brief candle!' light no more their sin,
'Fast life!'—that hastes to shame and misery.

"On ASCOT's heath fair shines the summer sun,
And fair is she, who waits his smile to greet,
'Love to the rescue?' He may yet be won,
Tho' gambling friends delay his eager feet.

"As 'mid the scudding clouds the full-orbed moon
Lights up the landscape with her silver sheen,
So in life's darkest hour, love's glowing noon
Flings glints of glory on the chequered scene.

"Husband and father now, but careless still,
Still heedless, hopeful, joyous to the last,
So strong to love, so impotent to will,
The doom-dark days are gathering round thee fast.

"The treasured wife, the little ones beloved,
Still touch the tender chord within thy breast;
Still find thee fond, indulgent, lightly moved,
Till the sad day that views thy stern ARREST.

"The sumptuous home must pass to other hands,
The stately menials seek a stranger's pay;
Want is before thee, with her hard commands,
To seek thy children's bread from day to day.

"The graceful pencil once employed in sport,
The gentle wife for sordid need must use;
Whilst thou wilt try, but try in vain, to court
Some inspiration from the comic Muse.

"Ah! little fitted for such STRUGGLES ye!
The wit that gay companions oft beguiled,
Vainly would win, in thine extremity,
Some little luxury for thy dying child.

"Then comes the end—THE dreadful END! Oh, never,
In all the long, long catalogue of Art,
Did Painting so successfully endeavour
To catch the working of a human heart.

"No bloodshed here, no horror piled up high,
To startle, shock, disgust away our dread;
Only that speechless, piteous agony:
That living face more deathly than the dead!

"Only that wan, white face, the spot that burns
On either cheek, the straining hands that press
And clutch the lock, the hot dry eye that turns
Its eager, hunted look on nothingness.

"We gaze upon the dead, that's living still,
The self-condemned! still breathing God's pure air;
The final, fatal energy of will,
The last heart-throbbings of that deep despair.

"We read, in that dread parable of old,
Of the majestic patriarch bending low
From heaven's high steep, the lost one to behold,
Too late, repentant in th' abode of woe.

"When the weird Florentine, with pallid brow,
And look that seemed in other worlds to dwell,
Passed by, the shudd'ring children whispered, 'Now,
Ye see the man who has returned from hell.'

"So feel we, standing silent, spell-bound, dumb,
In the dread presence of that fearful ban;
That hopeless, helpless look, with horror numb,
The doomed look upon a living man!

"Oh, great enchanter! whose transcendent skill
Can thus endow the creatures of thy hand
With simulated life! exert thy will,
Prospero! if unbroken yet thy wand.

"Oh, grant us one scene more—the last, the best;
Not thus the sad, pathetic tale must close:
They are too real: our spirits cannot rest,
Heart-haunted by the story of their woes.

"Oh, vision forth some help, not quite too late,
Some interposing hand, with kindly power,
To bid them live, and find a fairer fate,
Better and wiser for each troublous hour.

"The rapturous joy that could not, would not speak,
Art's common language to express must fail;
A hand, than thine less gifted, well might seek
The refuge of the Grecian painter's veil.

"But thou, thou, who couldst limn the voiceless woe,
The strong man's anguish in a look like this;
Thou might perchance find brushes to impart
A glimpse of that unutterable bliss.

"Oh, mighty master! pardon thou the lay,
That dares intrude upon thy leisure hour:
Thou hast the power of a giant's sway,
Not 'as a giant,' but gently, use thy power."

The writer of this "appeal" is unknown to me—indeed, there is no name attached to it. I publish it as a curiosity, not without merit, I think, in itself, though it so foolishly exaggerates my own.

I hope I shall be believed when I declare that a tolerably correct knowledge of the merits and demerits of the "Road to Ruin" prevents my deriving much satisfaction from the kindly mistaken estimate of my poetical friend; and that I am prompted by no feeling of gratified vanity in printing these verses, but merely by a desire to show my readers a pretty example of over-appreciative, and, I imagine, very youthful, enthusiasm.

Opposite is a puzzle-letter from George Cruikshank, from 48, Mornington Place, N.W., July 18, 1861. I translate the first lines of this hieroglyphic, and leave my reader to interpret the rest:

"To the Great Painter, W. Powell Frith, R.A."

Amongst the books that I loved in my youth, none dwell more delightfully in my memory, and none have retained my affection more entirely, than Bewick's "British Birds." I shot my first snipe when I was twelve years old; and well do I recollect wondering at Bewick's beautiful representation of it, and the pleasure I felt in learning all about its habits, so simply set forth by the artist author. Bewick died four years before my snipe.

I learnt to my surprise, just ten years ago, that two daughters of my idol were still living; and that they had been friends of a gentleman in whom I was greatly interested, who had been visited with such undeserved misfortune as to necessitate the raising of a fund for his relief.

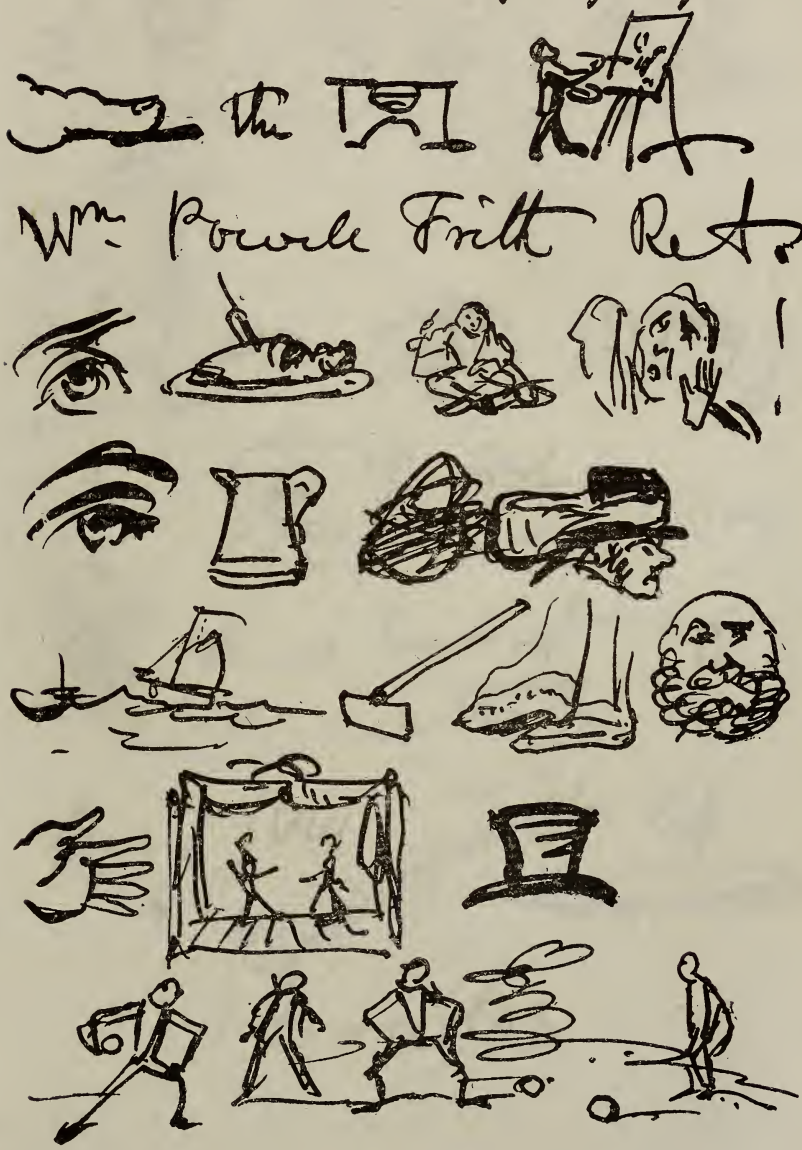
My friend could not believe that these ladies were still alive; and it was to ascertain the fact, and to beg for assistance, that I wrote to the address supplied to me.

Here is the reply, which was accompanied by a substantial offering:

"19, West Street, Gateshead,
"July 20, 1878.

"Misses Bewick beg to thank Mr. Frith for his kind letter, and to say they are the daughters of

48 Mornington Place N.W.
July 16/61.



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Barrels.

Thomas Bewick, who died just fifty years ago, a loss never to be forgotten by them. His bright genius was as nothing in comparison with his goodness of heart and lovable disposition; and with every good wish for the success of the —— Fund,

"Your obliged

"ISABELLA BEWICK."

Here is a letter which I read with melancholy interest; it is one of many that I have received from persons bitten by the desire to become artists:

"March 19, 1878.

"SIR,

"I will endeavour to be as brief as possible in what I wish to lay before you. I am a young man, twenty years of age, and tolerably well educated. I have no friend in England able to assist me, and I wish to become an artist. I have never been taught drawing; and what little I do know I have acquired myself. But I can say this with confidence, that if I could only get instruction, or someone to take me in hand, I should turn out creditable. I have the imagination and the design, if I could only depict them correctly drawn; and to do that, I must be taught. But the cheapest means of instruction are entirely beyond my reach, for my meagre mode of living has been by addressing envelopes; and now even that has failed, owing, I suppose, to trade being so bad.

"You may think it rather impudence or presumption in my thus applying to you; but being familiar

with your name as one of the leading members of the profession, I have ventured to do so, if only to obtain advice. If I could only make myself useful, no matter in what humble capacity, to any artist, so that in return I should receive a little teaching, and, if possible, means of supporting myself, I should be happy; for I should then have an opportunity of proving what I say. I enclose three sketches I made last night, two original. I do not show them as specimens, for that would be absurd; but I find it impossible to say half I should wish to say, as it is hard to transfer your exact ideas to paper.

"I hope, sir, that you will look leniently on my possibly foolish notions; and hoping to obtain at least advice,

"I remain, sir,

"Yours respectfully,

"_____."

Ten years have passed since the above was written, and my poor correspondent remains unknown as an artist. I could only assist him by advice, which, I fear, his unfortunate position prevented his following.

I will give one more specimen of a would-be painter, which to artists will have its comic side:

"May 13, 1874.

"DEAR SIR,

"I trust you will pardon my intrusion upon your valuable time; but for the sake of the art by

which you have earned such a deserved pre-eminence, I should esteem it a favour if you would generously inform me what I am to do under the following circumstances.

"This letter is on behalf of my wife, who is very talented in the art of drawing in lead-pencil; the shading is so well, that some persons, who are professional artists, say they *could not do it.* She is especially good in delineating *the eyes.* One picture —a landscape, the first sold—was drawn in lead-pencil, and she got £4 for it, at which the purchaser is so pleased, that she is now engaged by him in drawing his portrait.

"I have a few scraps of hers by me, and as they are quite sufficient for anyone who is an experienced judge to form an opinion, if you, sir, who is at the head of such a noble art, would kindly grant her an interview, or even deign to inform her of the proper course to pursue in submitting her pictures to some impartial judge of the art, and let her hear from his own lips whether she will ever be qualified to enter upon such an honourable pursuit, or rather profession.

"Trusting that you will pardon me for thus transgressing so long upon your time,

"I am, dear sir,

"On behalf of my wife,

"Yours very truly,

"———.

"P.S.—Also very good in water-colour painting,

and just is learning to paint in oil. If you will kindly reply. I enclose stamp."

Whether I had an interview with the heroine of the above I do not remember, but no doubt I showed her, through the advice bred of experience, that "shading with a lead-pencil" was a very insignificant bypath on the road to excellence. Some of these experiences of the utter ignorance of the requirements and difficulties besetting the painter's calling, would be laughable if they were not so often painful.

Begging letters are sometimes amusing. I think a perusal of the following, evidently the production of a misguided artist, will repay my reader :

"August 9.

"Mr. Frith having given me ten shillings altogether, if he would give me half-sovereign it would make me proud. I would withdraw any request which might not meet Mr. Frith's intentions ; therefore, at the outside, would ask Mr. Frith to give me ten shillings, and I would not repeat any requests for twelve months, not asking Mr. Frith for money at a larger scale than one pound a year. A half-sovereign would purchase a good deal of bread for a short time. Insufficient supply of bread, and no butter, is what I complain of. Two great hungry boys and three girls. I am only desirous of getting the drawing and painting in motion, as may be seen from a note-book which I have in my pocket, which contains a pen-and-ink sketch of her majesty the

queen, that, carried into effect, would be a group of the royal family.

"A long time back I inquired as to how I might get an interview with the prince of wales. I was told to write to Fisher the secretary, but he was not in town. This was three years back. I thought his royal highness might give me a regular income if he thought I was capable of holding the office of painter in ordinary. Such an office David Wilkie held. David Wilkie was a bachelor, and had no interruptions to his pursuits. I thought it not safe to have anything sent to me to the B—— post-office, because I suspected that it might be stolen. I am very suspicious. I think there is temptation to purloin when they think the party addressed is an easy person not likely to kick up a row. Some of these postmasters have known vicissitudes, and, unless a man has the highest principles, could not resist the temptation. I had not pluck to call upon the people to ask them for money—not as yet. I pass and repass their houses without having pluck to call and ask for anything, caused partly by a rebuff I received from Mr. C., of B——, for he said, 'Cut it short' (my message); and added in my hearing, not to me, but to the servant, 'Tell him I have enough to do with my own people.'

"If Mr. Frith sent me the money, would he please to put it in a cut card by registered letter? The reason I make the application is this: I dreamt that Mr. Frith, or some one, sent me that amount; perhaps he would make the said dream come true.

Mr. Frith might take it into his head to send me one pound once in twelve months, either in four or two parts, or at once, I promising not to tease Mr. Frith until September, 1870. Perhaps by that time my position might be considerably altered as regards pecuniary difficulties.

"Perhaps this is the last note for twelve months, at least, I shall trouble you with. What's the good of wasting paper and one's time for nothing?

"I am, yours respectfully,

"_____."

I have preserved another specimen of this gentleman's penmanship. Here it is:

"Kent,
"Sept. 8.

"DEAR SIR,

"Will you act the part of a man and a christian, and send me a money order for whatever you can afford? Try and send it quick if you can. I have walked three times to London and back—twelve miles there and twelve miles back—all for nothing.

"Sir, my eldest brother was born in 1818, and died 1st of May, 1853, at the early age of thirty-four years and eleven months. There was nine children born between me and my brother. His complaint was fever, engendered in himself through one week's want of sleep; and, as the mary-le-bone church was ringing for service, he expired at six in the evening. I formed the idea of not running about

the world to get my living, having walking about, and a little too much of it, being rather strained in the hip. My week's allowance is too small, and it makes a person bold. The old and respected doctor here told me to 'give others a turn' on the occasion of his giving me the sum of half a sovereign to carry me through the past week.

"I describe myself as member of a bankrupt family. The principal gentleman down here asked me how long I had been here. I replied ten years. And who was your father? He was an artillery officer of the artillery. He married the daughter of Colonel —— in the year 1816, and General ——, born 1757 and died 1825, was the grandfather of the generation to which I belong. I used to etch woodcuts from the *Illustrated News* with etching pen. In 1847, I did Ward's 'South Sea Bubble;' 1848, Frith's 'Merry Making;' also 'Milton visiting Galileo in Prison.'

"I formed the idea of becoming a Royal Academician.

"With respects,

"Yours respectfully,

"_____."

On reading the foregoing letters to a friend, I am told that I shall be accused of having invented some part, if not the whole of them. In reply to such a charge, I have to say that the original letters exist, and I shall be glad to show them to any doubter of my veracity.

"Variety is charming," and, in proof thereof, I present my readers with a poem by my old friend, Dr. Doran. As a prose writer, the doctor is well known; as a poet, he will make his first appearance —so far as my knowledge of his works extends—in the following epic, which conveys an invitation to dinner at "our club":

"33, Lansdowne Road,
"March 11, 1870.

"My dear Frith,—the club laws
Have thought proper to fix
The moment for dining
Precisely at six.

"On Saturday, therefore,
Myself will contrive
To be at Pem Villas
Precisely at five.

"But I may as well add,
That they don't care a fig
As to fashion or form
Of a visitor's rig.

"You may adjust your dress
Before leaving home.
Come in black, white, or gray—
The great thing is—come!

"At our club 'tisn't clothes
For a moment can win 'em;
But the heart, or the head,
Of the good fellow in 'em.

"And a better than Frith
(This I swear by the Koran)
Has never been brought there
By yours,—J. Doran."

No apology is needed for the introduction in this place of a performance in prose by another author friend of mine. In reply to an invitation to dinner, in which a choice between two days was given, the writer says:

"Tavistock House,
"May 27, 1854.

"My dear Frith,

"Most unfortunately I am engaged on both days. The reason is, as we leave town on the seventeenth, that Mrs. Dickens is in the meantime picking up all manner of conditional engagements, and firing me off like a sort of revolver.

"Ever faithfully yours,
"Charles Dickens."

Here follow two of Dickens's letters, which should have appeared in my former volumes. I can only hope that my irregularity may be forgiven. The first arose from anxiety as to the fate of my picture of "Kate Nickleby," so long detained by the engraver:

"1, Devonshire Terrace,
"Tuesday, Aug. 24, 1847.

"My dear Sir,

"I shall be very much obliged to you if you will make inquiry after 'Kate Nickleby,' and

get her sent back to me. I am newly returned to my own house here, and am very anxious to get it thoroughly in order. I am very incomplete without the presence of that young lady, to which I attach great value.

"Believe me,

"Very truly yours,

"CHARLES DICKENS."

I had asked Dickens to come and see my pictures intended for the exhibition of 1848; here is his reply:

"Devonshire Terrace,

"April 16, 1848.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Pray don't think me indifferent to your kind invitation to see your pictures before they went to the Academy. Mrs. Dickens and I, having an old engagement for the afternoon of *the* day, were obliged to cut short a pictorial pilgrimage we were elaborately performing—to leave a very interesting part of it undone—and to fly, as for our lives, to an early dinner-party.

"Believe me,

"Faithfully yours,

"CHARLES DICKENS."

"Time flies" backwards and forwards under my management, with erratic movement and occasional rapidity very unusual to the elderly gentleman with

the forelock, who must now please to skip from the year 1848 back to 1869:

"Leeds,
"April 15, 1869.

"MY DEAR FRITH,

"I have your letter here. What you write of the murder gives me very high gratification, because *I* know that *you* know what passion and expression are, and I esteem your praise accordingly." (Here follow directions with regard to a charitable matter in which we were both interested.) ". . . . They are selling my tickets here at a guinea apiece (original cost five shillings). I wonder who gets the money! I know who don't, and that is

"Your ever illustrious friend,
"CHARLES DICKENS."

The above was written during one of the reading tours in the provinces, and the murder was that done by Bill Sykes, a deed which those who were fortunate enough to see Dickens's rendering of it can never forget.

Artists receive applications from persons desirous of posing as models—both personal and by letter—which are often amusing enough. As examples, I offer the following:

"TO THE HONOURABLE GENTLEMAN.

"I am that model that send me Mr. Chevalier with the letter about to monts ago. Supply to this

to engage me to tell me yas or not. And if His like to see me am here.

"I am your faithfel
"Servant Mr. Gaetano Piorari
"Eyre Street Hill
"Clerkenwell E.C."

A lady speaks :

"To W. P. Frith, Esq., R.A.

"Sir,

"Should you desire an artist model, may I ask you to bear in mind my name and address. My fee is ten and sixpence per hour. I could sit either for head, eyes, brows, forehead, ears, mouth, and bust. I trust I may have a favourable reply, and beg to apologize for this intrusion.

"Faithful yours,
"——."

The long-established pay for sitters being but a shilling an hour, I could not avail myself of those very expensive features. I purposely omit names and addresses.

Again a lady honours me :

"Sir,

"Pardon my addressing you, but I venture to do so as I wish to become a model if you require one ; but I must tell you that I could only sit dressed or draped. I could NOT possibly sit *nude*. I am about thirty ; tall, commanding figure ; fair com-

plexion; golden hair, worn in heavy plaits; *very* small *ears*, and *very* small *hands;* fine arms and wide shoulders, and considered fine bust; and am considered to have *classical* features. I should be so much obliged if you would allow me to call on you some morning, when you might engage me about 12.30, or kindly recommend me to a brother artist. I could have obtained a position at the Royal Academy, but I could not have undertaken *that.* I would prefer to sit to one artist—not to many. I am a lady, but wish to make a little money in this way.

"I remain, sir,

"Yours truly,

"———."

I add an example of personal application. A knock at the studio-door, and enter a woman, extremely plain, not to say ugly, with a face artificially whitened and deeply marked by small-pox; age about fifty. The first sight of this lady created an impression that I was made the victim of a practical joke by some brother artist.

"You use models, I believe?" said the woman. "I want to sit; can you employ me?"

I was busy painting, but I put down palette and brushes, took up my book in which the names and addresses of models are entered, and asked the lady's name.

"Oh, never mind my name; I want to sit!"

"But you can't sit now; I am busy at work on this drapery from my lay figure, as you see."

"What, that big doll there? she's no good; much better try me."

"No; you couldn't sit still long enough—you would be forced to rest, and then the folds of the drapery would be——"

"Oh yes, I could; you just try me."

By this time, as the would-be model came close to me to examine my picture, I became aware of an aroma which often accompanies those who habitually indulge in alcoholic drinks.

"What's all that about now? What are all them people doing of?"

"Amusing themselves," I replied; "and you must excuse me, I want to go on with my work. Will you let me have your name and address, and if I want you, I will——"

"No; I want to sit now—I've come a long way. What do you paint them sort of subjects for? you should do Scripture subjects, that's what you should do. Them's what I've sat for—'Holy Families,' and that—why don't you?"

"Because I am not clever enough; those subjects are not in my line."

"Oh, gammon! one subject's as easy as another; but Scripture pictures is my favourites, and what I always sit for. Lots of 'Virgin Marys' has been done from me!"

"By whom, pray?" said I.

"I suppose you don't doubt my word, good gentleman, do you?" in rather a fierce tone.

"Now, really, Mrs. or Miss whatever your name

is, I can't spare time to talk to you; I don't paint Scripture pictures, and therefore you are no use to me, and I must wish you good-morning."

"You haven't got the price of a glass of spirits about you, have you?" said the lady.

"No; I think you have had spirits enough."

"Now, I call that real mean, and, what's more, it ain't true; I've come a long way, and neither bite nor sup has passed my lips"—after a pause—"but I see you're no good, so I'm off!" And off she went, leaving me very thankful to be rid of her.

People calling themselves models frequently call upon me without having a single quality to recommend them for the employment. They are short, ill-shaped—deformed sometimes; and with faces free from both beauty and character. I remember an instance of a scarecrow of a girl, thin to emaciation, with a long, angular face that recalled the type common to the Grosvenor Gallery, to whom I felt strongly inclined to say, "Go to the deuce!" (I was in a bad humour, I remember); but for "deuce" I substituted the name of a well-known worshipper of the attenuated and the angular, and I said, "Go to ——; he will be sure to employ you." The girl took my advice; and, if I may judge from the frequent appearance of her face and form in certain pictures, she gets plenty of work from the great man and his satellites.

Here we have a criticism by a Sir Gilbert Elliott of the exhibition of the Royal Academy nearly a hundred years ago:

"Saturday, May 9, 1789.

"I saw the exhibition yesterday for the first time. It is so bad, I don't think I shall return there. Sir Joshua has many pictures; but I don't admire them much. His principal one is "Cymon and Iphigenia." I saw also an exhibition of pictures bought by Macklin to make engravings from for the English poets. Gainsborough's pictures are selling at from £200 to £500 apiece. Bad as we are, I believe our school is as good as any other in Europe, if not better."*

The "Cymon and Iphigenia" is the splendid Reynolds now in the Royal Collection. Sir Gilbert Elliott was evidently difficult to please.

A delightful little book of reminiscences was recently published by the Rev. Mr. Rogers—a volume which I heartily recommend to my readers, if they are not already acquainted with it. The following letter from Anthony Trollope sums up the character of Mr. Rogers completely, and in very few words:

"39, Montague Square,
"Nov. 10, 1876.

"My dear Frith,

"Do you know Parson Rogers, of Bishopsgate—a man who, among parsons, is about the best in these parts? He has a giving away of prizes at his place to be effected on Tuesday, November 28, at which I have undertaken to do the speechifying (which will not therefore be long). Talking to me

* Sir Gilbert Elliott to his wife, "Life and Letters," vol. i., p. 38.

about it yesterday, he said that he would very much like to get some one or two others, especially an artist, as the younkers like to see, and be seen by, persons of whom they have heard. I said I would ask you to come with me, and he bade me say how delighted he would be if you would do so.

"If so, you would accompany me, and we would dine with him at six p.m. at his City parsonage in Devonshire Square. Do come if you can. He is a very dear friend of mine.

"Yours always,

"ANTHONY TROLLOPE."

The occasion was the giving prizes for efficiency in drawing, and I was much surprised at the merit of many of the works displayed. Trollope made a good speech, and I made a bad one.

I regret to say I possess no more letters of Trollope that would be of public interest.

As I have permitted Dr. Doran to speak in rhyme, I now confer a similar benefit on Shirley Brooks. The occasion of the following—doggerel, I think it must be called—was the birthday of my first wife:

"UNTO MY FRIEND, MISTRESS FRITH, THESE:

"MADAM,

"Upon your natal day,
My Muse would fain a flight essay;
But after months of weather sloppy,
Her wings are very wet and floppy.
So, with umbrella and goloshes,
To No. 7 she slides and squashes,

And gives your bell a vicious tugging,
And out a limpish card a-lugging,
Up your dear hospitable passage
She splutters out a kindly message.
Which is that I, her keeper, send
Love to my dear and valued friend ;
And hope that (spite of infants rancorous,
Likewise of *Cottle*, the cantankerous)
The 'Day' will prove the sort of day
That all who love her wish it may,
And be but one of such a series
As folks describe in 'Notes and Queries,'
A hundred spent in bliss and clover ;
And, if she likes, a dozen over.
Which message Musa now delivers,
With sneezes, snufflings, snorts, and shivers ;
And, like the dove that left the ark
('A soiled dove,' is the pert remark),
Returns,
Kent Terrace, Regent's Park.

"Dec. 20, 1872 (365th day of the deluge)."

My dear old friend shall now speak in more familiar prose. This note seems to have been in reply to my wife's suggestion that we should spend our holidays together :

"*Punch* Office,
"Bouverie Street,
"Sept. 1, 1866.

"I send my dear Mrs. Frith a few lines to thank her very kindly and sincerely ; but it must be

Boulogne-upon-the-Sea. I have to work for du Maurier, and we must be together. Another year I hope we may make holiday together—that is, if I am not divorced in the meantime. The fact is that we went to the Adelphi last night, and had a box close to the stage.

"MISS FURTARDO!!!

"But I draw a veil over the scene. It was not *my* fault. I *am* susceptible. I have a large heart. I submit, perhaps too easily, to fascinations.

"There is no open quarrel *yet*. It may be averted.

"But the truce can only be oller. I have met my FATE. Think kindly of me if you can.

"I am going to try whether partridges and champagne will act as oil upon the troubled waters. I fear it will be only oil of vitriol.

"Again I say think kindly of me.

"It was HER fault that we got a box, mind that.

"It was also HER fault that we stayed to see 'Helen.' I wanted to go home and smoke.

"But recriminations are idle. It was Fate—'Kismet,' as the Orientals say. I have forgiven my wife for being less attractive than Miss Furtardo. Can man do more? Can woman? Again I say think kindly of the enamoured and remorseful

"SHIRLEY."

About this time I had received a high compliment connected with my profession from Stockholm. Brooks seized the occasion to perpetrate the following:

"LATEST FROM STOCKHOLM:

"'Tis very fit he should be made a Swede,
Who could *Stock-home* with such a beauteous breed."

(A very stupid heppygram, indeed.
W. P. F.)

"Then make a better, Cottle, and be deed."

Punch.

It goes without saying that contributions, both literary and artistic, are sent to *Punch* in vast numbers. Specimens remarkable for their absurdity were sometimes sent on to me by Brooks, who generally accused me of their authorship. I annex two examples:

"Jan. 19.

"SIR,

"I have been studeying your Papers since the 14 Dec., and my idea is you are alluding to me; if not, i am no critic. i am sorry i am not in a position to remove the cause at presant; but i will as soon as it is conveniant.

"i am, sir, yours,

"With the graettest sinceraty,

"W. P. *FRITH.*"

"I assure you that *there is no allusion to* YOU; but suspicion ever 'aunts the guilty mind.

"*P.*"

The second effusion was prefaced by the following letter from Brooks:

"DEAR FRITH,

"If you write to me in this manner, I fear we must cease to correspond. If you must be rude and profane, you might spell properly. Besides, I don't know what you mean.

"Yours indignantly,

"EPAMINONDAS BLUNDERSNATCH."

"TO THE EDITOR, 'PUNCH':

"SIR,

"When, for goodness' sake, will you have done stiking your 'Special Artist' in *Punch?* What, in the name of Heaven, there can be commic in your d——d artist and the Academy, I cannot make out! I am rather fond of perusing commic papers; but to take up *Punch* lately, and see nothing but the Academy and our infernal artist, is enough to make one sic! Do give the poor Devil a rest, and talk about something else just a little while!

"Yours, etc.,

"FLEET STREET."

It would not be difficult to estimate at its true value the quality of the intellect that could trouble itself to send the anecdote below to our friend *Punch.*

"At a dinner-party where the misfortunes of the late Emperor of France was the topic of conversation, a lady was seen to take a bone from her plate and place it on the table. On being asked why she

did this, she replied: 'Ah! can't you guess? It is Bone-a-part.' Her wit was greatly applauded, and an old gentleman who heard it thought that, at the next dinner-party, he would say the same. On his being asked why he took a bone from his plate to put on the table, he replied: 'Ah! can't you guess? It is—it is—Napoleon!'

"*This came from the Hague--all the way.*

"*Go and do thou likewise.*

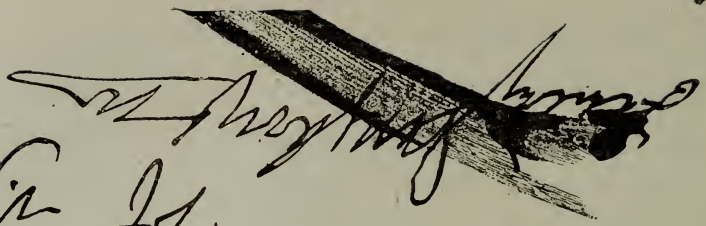
"S. B. to W. P. F."

One more "witticism," sent for insertion in *Punch* during the exhibition of the works of Sir Edwin Landseer at Burlington House. That great painter died in 1873, and a large collection of his pictures was shown at Burlington House in the following winter.

"A Hint to the Royal Academy.

"Would it not have been more appropriate, during the present exhibition of Landseer's paintings, to have styled the handbook a *dog*alogue instead of a *cat*alogue?"

In 1873 a large party of artists was entertained at Manchester by Mr. William Agnew. The occasion was some function the nature of which I forget. I was not of the party, but one of my sons was, and, judging by his signature on the wonderful document exposed here, he was the only sober one of the jovial crew. His not being an artist may account



Sir John Mantell and Sta

The R.A's be d——d.

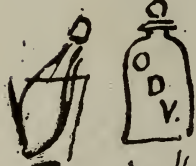
G. A Storey.

I shant play it
aint my writing

G A Storey —

George Wm Agnew.
Perfectly sober please
Charles Geo Smith

O D V.



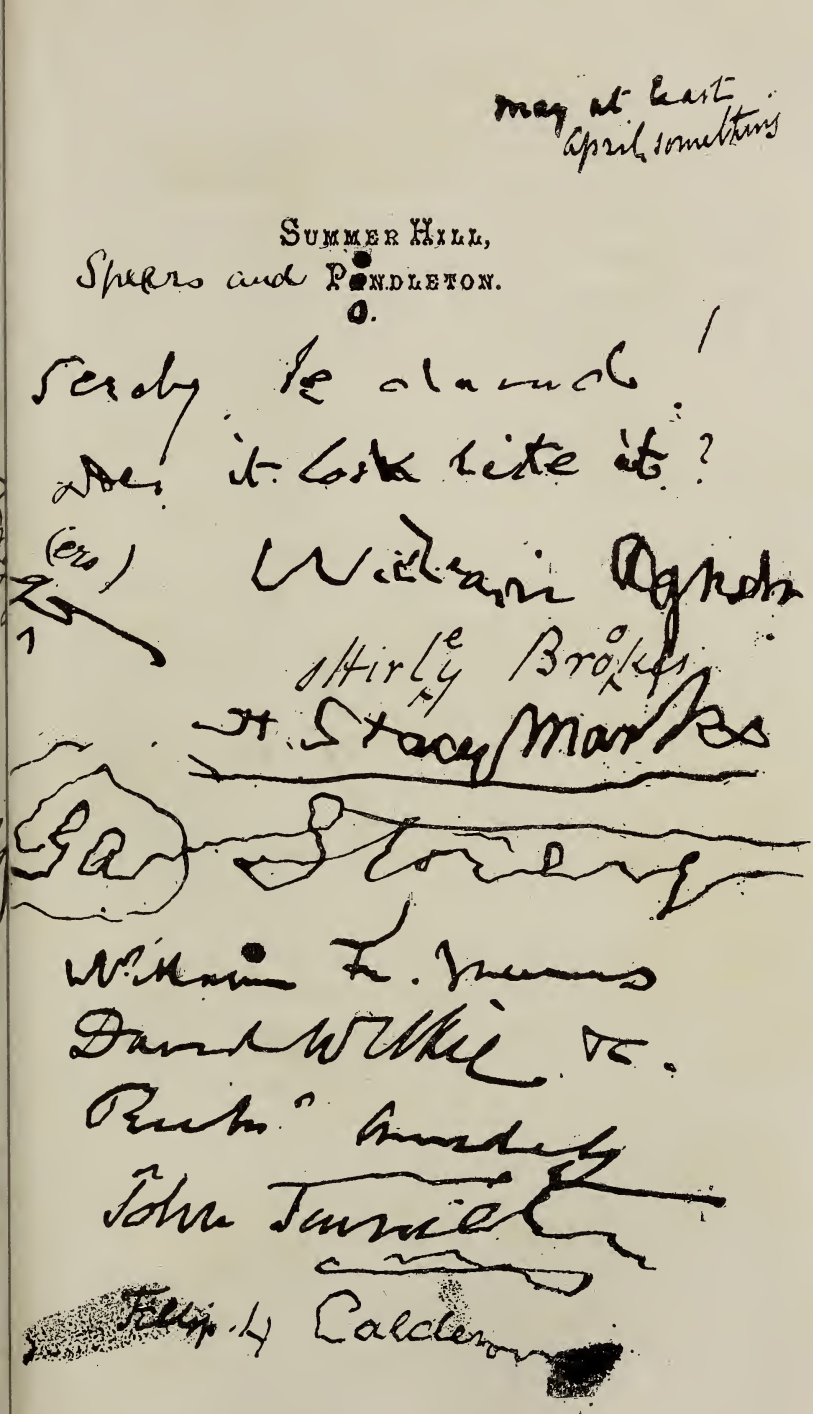
F. W.

Tenge du Kiki dumorrier

may at least
April sometime

SUMMER HILL,

Speers and PENDLETON.



for that. The fact of every one of the signatories being addicted to habits of extreme moderation made their condition, according to their penmanship, the more incomprehensible, or rather comprehensible enough, as Shirley Brooks had the direction of the writers' hands. I received the missive enclosed in the following letter:

"6, Kent Terrace, Regent's Park,
"2nd Sunday after Easter, 1873.

"CHER COTTLE,

"I sincerely hope you are sober now, and penitent. That was really a very drunken letter you sent to William Agnew, and though you naturally say, 'What else could be expected from an R.A.?' you should consider your reputation, however undeserved it may be. Pray take the pledge and be a Good Templar. *See from the enclosed what vice leads to.* How would you like to lecture all over America as the Eminent English Convict?

"We enjoyed ourselves with some vigour at Manchester. Two balls: Wednesday and Thursday—bed at quarter-past four; and two big dinners that I think did me good. I have had no 'out' since October.

"Come to the press private view at the Royal Academy on Wednesday, and give me the benefit of your cynicism. I was in hopes that we should meet on the previous evening in Hertford Street, but I find you don't go there. *That* day is my birthday, so you lose an interesting solemnity—that

of drinking my health. It would have been something in your 'Memoirs' to have it noted that you had had this honour and glory. I am fifty-two.

"You know, perhaps, the words attributed to the dying Wolsey or somebody, 'If I had served my God as I served my King, I should be better off now,' or thereabouts. A Manchester man relating the story gave the speech to Oliver Cromwell.

"Ever yours,

"S. B."

Amongst the few really *paintable* subjects proposed to me, I think the following, kindly sent to me by Miss Amelia B. Edwards, is one of the best. Here, again, an admirable writer shows a power of "word painting" much akin to Sala's. I have never seen any of Miss Edwards's brush-work, but I am not surprised to hear that she is scarcely less successful with the pencil than she is with the pen:

"The Larches,

"Westbury-on-Tyne, Bristol,

"June 15, 1876.

"DEAR MR. FRITH,"

(The first part of this letter contains private matter of no interest to the general reader.)

"Now about the proposed subject:

"My notion is the deck of a P. and O. steamer homeward bound. I never trod the deck of a P. and O. steamer till I went to Egypt *viâ* Brindisi and Cairo, and I saw your picture immediately. I never was so struck with the fitness of painter and

subject for each other. I seemed to be looking at a painting by you, and not at the real thing. At the same time I saw how greatly the interest of it would be increased by *reversing* the course of the ship, and treating it as a home-coming freight.

"In the first place, pictorially, the deck of a P. and O. is a grand *mise en scène.* Its great length and size, the numerous white-hooded air-funnels, the smoke-fumes, the rigging, not crowded as in a puny sailing-vessel, but enough to cut the sky picturesquely, the flag flying, etc., etc.—all would make for the artist.

"The characters are, of course, of the greatest interest and variety. They might be added to *ad infinitum*, but these are a few that suggest themselves to me.

"The ship's officers, sailors, cabin-boys, grimy engineer, and captain (generally very attentive to the unprotected ladies, showing them maps of the ship's course, and letting them look through his glass, etc.).

"Ayah, bringing home European children for education in England.

"Invalided civilian on sick-leave. Ex-Governor-General returning with secretary and suite.

"Indian grandee and suite *en route* to visit Europe. Young widow of English husband killed by climate.

"Officers of various regiments returning after Indian service, and privates ditto. Officers' wives.

"Japanese dignitaries and attendants, or young

Japanese gentlemen bound for English university life. A Chinaman. Egyptians, picked up at Suez, in European dress and fez, with Arab attendants. French engineers from ditto *décorés*.

"Pet birds and animals from India, with keepers, etc., etc.; tiger in a cage, monkeys, parrots, a pet gazelle walking about the deck.

"The ship's cow (always a great pet) in her pen.

"The stewardess and steward. Basket of fresh dates and bananas—bought at Suez—which people eat on deck. Some play chess or cards. Ladies in lounging-chairs work, read, and flirt.

"Special artist of a paper sketching. Sometimes the young men bring out their guns, and send shots after sea-gulls. When part of a regiment is on board, the men go through regular daily parade, which is a pretty sight on board.

"These are only some of an infinite number of incidents. You would see the real thing by going to Southampton and seeing the arrival of a P. and O. from India *viâ* Suez. But I should think the best way to study it would be to go to Gibraltar, and come home on board; because a vessel on coming into port is all confusion, and one only sees the real life of the thing when the daily routine is going on.

"I dare say you will not feel the subject as strongly as I do. One never *does* care for things that other people propose—at least, I never do. Still, I do believe it is a great subject—certainly a national one, and in these days of interest in things Indian it would, I should fancy, be an attraction.

"Anyhow, you can but pitch this long letter into the waste-paper basket!

"Believe me, dear Mr. Frith,

"Ever yours sincerely,

"AMELIA B. EDWARDS."

Here follows another suggestion of a very different subject, with my apology to the writer for thus making it public:

"11, Chancelleria Street,
"Jerez de la Frontera,
"Province of Cadiz, Spain,
"Feb. 26, 1876.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Pardon a stranger for taking a great liberty. The sons of art, who take so individual a line in painting, and carry it through so marvellously as you do, must sometimes be victims, I suppose.

"I visited this week one of the largest prisons (called here *Presidios*) of Spain—that of Seville, and the moment I entered the filthy courtyard I saw a sight that made me say, 'Oh, if Frith could but see and paint this!'

"Here is the scene:

"VACCINATION-DAY IN SEVILLE PRISON.

"A large open courtyard with ancient stone quadrangle, like a monastery. A few gaily dressed vendors of fruit and vegetables to the prisoners; a ring of four hundred dirty prisoners, each in his provincial costume. A knot in the centre, where a

huge black cow was tied down to a bench, a man tapping it for lymph. Four doctors at work operating on the arms of four men, stripped naked to the waist, the naked men filing off, and others stripped and coming up, grinning or swearing, to be operated upon. The bars of the dungeon gleaming with the refractory men's faces, who had climbed up to see the sport. About fifty fellows lying about asleep, and twenty or thirty knitting stockings or making sandals. Could you ever think of this as your subject for one of your great pictures—like the 'Gaming Table,' 'Railway Station,' or 'Derby Day'? Would that I could believe it!

"I would facilitate matters: entertain you, and get you an order, etc.; and deem it a great honour. Do write a line to,

"Yours faithfully,

"H. J. Rose

"(English Chaplain of Jerez)."

I hope I did "write a line" to my kind, though unknown friend. If I neglected to do so, I hope he will—though late—accept my best thanks for his suggestion, together with a sincere apology for my neglect. The subject would entail a journey to Spain: a difficult matter in 1876—impossible now.

Since writing the above I hear with regret of the death of Mr. Rose.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MRS. MAXWELL.

To the best of my belief there is not a thief amongst the whole of my acquaintance, to say nothing of my friends. How is it, then, that I have lost photographs, and letters from eminent persons, out of books made purposely to contain them, which lie on my drawing-room table? Is "Picture Sunday" the day selected by these marauders for their plunder?

A discovery which took place on the day following one of these anniversaries seems to favour that idea, for two leaves, each containing valuable autographs, were found conspicuous by their absence after an inundation of a "Show Sunday" crowd. The truth is, it is impossible to keep that picture-seeing multitude select, as the following experience will prove: The Melbury Road side of Holland Park bristles with artists' studios, and last "Picture Sunday," or rather Saturday, one of the most famous of these was besieged by the usual crowd in rather more than ordinary numbers. Carriages stood about, and

people went in and out like bees at a hive. Two persons were passing, to all appearance of the well-to-do class.

"What's all that about? what's to do there?" said the lady to the gentleman.

"I don't know—a party of some kind."

"Just go and ask that footman."

The lady waited; the gentleman crossed the road, spoke to the footman, and returned to his companion:

"Some pictures to be seen; come along. No; I asked him: there is nothing to pay; it's all right."

The two strangers entered, looked most likely a little at the pictures, and a great deal at the rest of the company, and departed; it is to be hoped without taking something away with them that they could not call their own. I am assured by a friend who witnessed this little episode that it is strictly true, and I can readily believe in it from my own experience; for affable strangers walk into my painting-room on show Saturday and Sunday without any introduction whatever, sometimes apologizing in terms that serve to aggravate the offence.

Mrs. Maxwell, *née* Miss Braddon, is beyond doubt one of the most popular writers of fiction of the present day. She is, in fact, a celebrity; but I fail to see in that fact any excuse for the person, or persons, who stole from my house some of her letters, and, what was worse, a paper of suggestions for

scenes for a Hogarthian or other series. I take this opportunity of expressing a hope that those documents, together with the only letter I ever received from Mr. Ruskin, one or two from Ouida (I am not so anxious about these last), and others, may be returned, when the penitent thief shall be forgiven.

On second thoughts I present the dishonest visitor with Ouida, on condition of a full restitution of the others.

Considering the wonderful facility with which Mrs. Maxwell weaves plot after plot in her novels, and the breathless interest she creates in her readers, it is to be expected that she would plan out scenes for a pictorial dramatic series—on the lines of Hogarth—with the skill common to so accomplished a writer. Alas! I feared to undertake the subject set forth in the following scenes. I think I know my public; 'tis a strange hodge-podge, tolerant of grossness in Hogarth, but intolerant—properly so I think—of an approach to details by a modern painter, such as the great moralist found necessary to enforce his lessons. I need scarcely say that Mrs. Maxwell is incapable of proposing any such drawbacks, as the suggestions she kindly allows me to publish will show; but I confess I shrank from the painfulness of her subject: 'tis a terrible tragedy, and I, alas! am not a tragic painter. My friend does not give a name to her subject, but the incidents will suggest one:

"Scene I.—The Husband's Friend.

"A Queen Anne drawing-room—Afternoon tea—Wife in tea-gown—Winter fire-glow—Children at play on hearth-rug—Husband introducing college friend.

"Scene II.—The Temptation.

"A conservatory—Wife in ball-dress—Husband's friend on his knees, his face tragic with the great struggle—A ball-room and dancers seen through curtained archway.

"Scene III.—The Mother's Farewell.

"Nursery—The two children asleep in their cots—Wife in travelling-dress, or in ball-dress with fur cloak thrown over it—Bends over boy's cot, taking her farewell—Lover in shadow of threshold.

"Scene IV.—Recognition.

"Bois de Boulogne or Champs Elysée—Husband and children walking; older now—Wife passing in carriage—The eldest girl recognises her mother and tries to go to her—Father holds her back.

"Scene V.—Repentance.

"South of France—Wife dying in hotel bedroom—Husband summoned to the bedside—Lover seated in balcony, back turned towards the room, head resting on folded arms—Blue sea, palm-trees, etc."

If portrait-painting were not so difficult as to absorb almost every faculty, including that of listening, I have thought what "good times" a portrait-painter must have with the variety of sitters with whom his practice brings him into contact. I have experienced both the pleasure and the difficulty, and never more of the former than when I painted Mrs. Maxwell's portrait many years ago. Wilkie used to

say, in excuse, I suppose, for his notoriously indifferent likenesses, that resemblance, especially in the young, didn't matter a bit, because people alter so much from time to time. "Who is to know," he is reported to have said, "after a few years, when the child has grown up, whether the portrait was like or not?" Unfortunately, parents know at the time whether the counterfeit presentment is correct or not, and if they are not satisfied, they are apt to show their resentment even to the extent of declining to pay. I had no such difficulty with Mrs. Maxwell; I think her picture is so like her now as to prove it must have been a fair resemblance when it was painted. Here is a letter apropos of the picture, but without date:

"My dear Mr. Frith,

"My motto on Thursday shall be that of your friend the Duke, 'I am here,' at any hour your gracious Majesty may please to ordain. To be handed down to posterity on your canvas is an honour so great that I would sit any number of hours on the stately throne in your painting-room and make no murmur, except when I fancy I am a bore and a nuisance, and you are beginning to wish me at the antipodes amongst the crowd of gapers round your 'Derby Day,' admiring what they ought not to admire, and leaving unappreciated what they ought to have approved, etc., etc. Another idea! Shakespeare and Cervantes expired on

the same day. Two great lights quenched simultaneously. I see in my mind's eye two great pictures—the last dreams of Shakespeare and Cervantes. The great man lies on his sick bed; the commonplace watchers sit by amidst all the commonplace details of the sick-room, and lo! above and around the bed of the sleeper flock the phantoms of his mighty creation: Desdemona pleading with the Moor; Juliet flirting with young Montague in the Italian moonlight; Falstaff, Catherine, Rosalind, and Coriolanus.

And then battered Cervantes, with clumsy Spanish peasants keeping guard over his pillow, and Don Quixote tilting at the windmills—and so on, and so on. I have no doubt the idea is utterly impracticable; but Archimedes must have been battering his brains a long time before he bounced out of his bath and comported himself like a maniac, and I hope by a long course of battering to arrive at something which shall cause you to exclaim Eureka! or rather, to me, 'you have Eurekered.'

"Is it to be one on Thursday, or earlier? If one o'clock will do, I need not trouble you to write, but will do myself the honour to make my appearance at that hour; and, in the meantime, with best compliments, I subscribe myself,

"Most faithfully yours,

"MARY MAXWELL."

By the allusion to the "Derby Day" in Australia,

and "The Duke's Motto," "I am here"—a play which Fechter made very popular—I should mark the date of the above about 1862.

I hesitate to publish complimentary remarks about myself; my excuse may be that those in the following letter arose in the kindness of the writer's nature, rather than from the waters of the well at the bottom of which *truth* is to be found:

No date.

"DEAR MR. FRITH,

"Your letter is only like yourself—all that is kind and frank, and unaffected; and if all genius was as free from disagreeable eccentricities as you are, no one would have any right to complain of the freaks of those fortunate individuals whose nostrils the sacred wind has inflated.

"I don't wonder that you are disgusted with portrait-painting, or, rather, with the sulks and dissatisfaction of sitters who entreat you to paint them, and then are savage that you don't give them Grecian noses and lilies and roses. Were I a portrait-painter, I would make all my masculine sitters Apollos, or Antinouses, and my lady subjects should be the image of the Venus of Milo, and then everybody would be happy.

"I am so glad you like 'The Lady's Mile!'

"I have made my painter a swell, haven't I? For the more I read of your confraternity, the more do I discover that successful painters have been swells time out of mind.

"We had a run through Belgium last year, and saw all that was to be seen, and I came back divided between the pre-Raphaelitism of Van Eyck and Memling, and the dash and fire of Rubens.

"With all regards to yourself and household, I am always,

"Most truly yours,

"MARY MAXWELL."

CHAPTER XXVII.

BOOK ILLUSTRATORS.

WITHIN my recollection there has been no change in art greater than that shown in the newspaper and book illustrations of the present day, as contrasted with those of fifty years ago. When Seymour—the first illustrator of "Pickwick"—died, it was with the greatest difficulty, and only after a conspicuous failure, that his place could be filled; and then only by an artist who, admirable as he was in many respects, displayed a tendency to exaggeration of characters, already fully charged by their author.

Until Leech appeared, the drawings in *Punch* were poor as works of art, though often humorous. No greater contrast could be imagined than a number of *Punch* of to-day in comparison with one of the early copies. Tenniel, du Maurier, Keene, Sambourne, and Furniss—to say nothing of other contributors—present a galaxy of ability that is truly remarkable, each of those men being thoroughly individual, and constantly admirable in his drawings. To my mind the illustrated papers, much as they have improved, by no means keep pace in

progress with *Punch* and the book illustrations. I would except some of the magazines, which seem to have felt the beauty of the American reproductions, and to have been stimulated into a healthy rivalry.

No one can have a keener sense of the merits of fine line or mezzotint engraving than the present writer, and no one less begrudges the honours of the Royal Academy to the distinguished men who at this time enjoy them ; but when I see *original designers* of real genius pour forth with astonishing prodigality, week after week and month after month, works, either in etching or on wood—in which such difficulties in art as composition, character, expression, and light and shadow, are successfully surmounted—I feel a sense of shame that some honourable mark is not placed upon their producers. An engraver is but a translator, after all ; and if the Royal Academy admits—as in my opinion it does very properly—the translator, why not the originator in black and white, who displays in his works every quality of art except colour ? I am no longer young ; but I hope I shall live to see my friends Tenniel and du Maurier, and some of their *confrères*, members of the Royal Academy. Tenniel and du Maurier are also painters of no mean ability—witness the former's work in the House of Lords ; they may therefore be said to have a double claim. I have no means of knowing whether any of those gentlemen care for Academic distinction ; nor do I think *that* a point to be considered. If my ideas on the subject are correct, the

compliment should be paid, and a long-standing grievance redressed.

Being a painter myself, I confess I never see one of the delightful compositions of du Maurier without a pang of regret that it is deprived of all the charm that colour by a dexterous hand would give it; but what delightful charms remain! Grace and beauty abound — admirable character and expression, with abundant refinement, are always present; and though I do not think humour, as in Leech, is often prominent, I could name instances in which nothing is wanted in that respect. I know no better examples of the truth of the adage, "Ars est celare artem," than the compositions of du Maurier present. Crowds of fashionable figures fill his rooms, and take their places so naturally as to suggest to the uninitiated an absence of artifice; though the laws of composition have been scrupulously observed.

When I undertook my picture of the "Private View," I was anxious to make it representative of some of the eminent men and women of our time who might have been present. In that spirit I wrote to du Maurier, and I append his reply:

"New Grove House,
"Hampstead Heath,
"Monday.

"My dear Frith,

"On public occasions such as the R.A. private view, or a dinner at the Mansion House, this child is 5 feet 9 inches. The boots which

cause this illusion cause also extreme inconvenience.

Don't peach! only 5 feet $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches in stockings. I will come and sit with pleasure some afternoon when this beastly almanack is done.

"Yours ever,

"G. DU MAURIER."

For perspective reasons, I always desire to know the height of my sitters. The following fancy sketch by himself was "too lovely" for my purpose, nor was the photograph of much service:

"St. Walentine's Day,

"Hampstead.

"MY DEAR FRITH,

"Tuesday, after 1, would be a better time for me; but if it is impossible, I will try for Sunday. Try and make it Tuesday if you can. Here is my face as it really is:

But if you prefer a photograph I send you one, just received on trial.

"Ever yours,

"G. DU MAURIER."

With the succeeding note, received in reply to my application for a sitting, I conclude my small tribute to one of the most charming artists of the day :

"Hampstead,
"April 12,
"1882.

"My dear Frith,

"I cannot as yet give an answer about sitting next week, not knowing when I can spare the time, as the Water Colour Gallery will have its touching-up days ; and my things may look so beastly bad, I may have to spend my miserable days with them. Also I've got a portrait to paint—what a lark !

"Can you send me any tickets for the private view ? A couple of dozen will do.

"Be kind to my seven-guinea coat.

"Yours ever,

"Geo. du Maurier."

The artists and contributors to *Punch* meet together at dinner every Wednesday, when the subject for the principal "cut" is discussed and determined. For very many years the incident—generally of a political character—has fallen for illustration into the able hands of John Tenniel. How admirably that artist does the bidding of his compeers, the numberless examples in the pages of *Punch* sufficiently prove.

Tenniel is *sui generis*. His style is unique. Nothing like it has ever been seen before ; and it is

not, I think, too much to say that when the time arrives—far distant may it be—when the pencil falls from that inimitable hand, nothing so quaint, so humorous, so completely appreciative of the subject suggested, will be seen again.

Palpable as is the evidence that, as the artist of *Punch*, Tenniel is the right man in the right place, it must not be forgotten that he is also an admirable illustrator of certain books. His drawings of "Alice in Wonderland," for example, greatly add to the charm of that pleasant story.

To those who may be excusably incredulous of the compatibility of grave historic art with the humorous and grotesque, I commend a study of Tenniel's fresco in the House of Lords.

I flatter myself that I made a good likeness of Tenniel in my "Private View;" and as I think a note from the artist will be acceptable to those who know the writer only through his pencil, I offer this small specimen of his penmanship:

"10, Portsdown Road,
"Maida Hill,
"Feb. 19, 1882.

"MY DEAR FRITH,

"Awfully proud
To be one of the crowd

in your picture.

"I will sit to you with very great pleasure any Wednesday afternoon you will kindly appoint. Next Wednesday, if you like, at, say, about three o'clock. The accompanying portrait is the only one that has

been taken of me at all in the position of your sketch. *Mem.:* I have cut off those ridiculous whiskers!

"Yours very faithfully,

"JOHN TENNIEL."

With the rest of the *Punch* artists, I regret to say, I have but a slight acquaintance, but I can assure them of what I am not vain enough to think they will care much about—that they have my warmest admiration.

Since the publication of my Autobiography, I have had the pleasure of a long private correspondence with the editor of *Punch*, to which I allude only to say that it has acted in hot-house fashion upon a previous friendly feeling. The nature of the correspondence prevents the reproduction of any of it in this place, but I print, with permission, the only notes I can find with the signature F. C. Burnand attached to them. They are only replies to invitations, but they afford a glimpse of the humour that might be expected from a consummate master of one of the rarest faculties.

"*Punch* Office,

"Oct. 12, 1872.

"DEAR FRITH,

"With pleasure.

"Tuesday, 15th, 7 p.m.

"Truly yours,

"F. C. BURNAND.

"I've a list of aliases.

"From Saturday night to Wednesday afternoon,

"Hale Lodge,

"Edgware,

"finds me.

"Wednesday night to Friday,

"Garrick Club.

Vague;
but a mixture of
Punch Office,
Garrick Club,
9, Garrick Street,
and
Hale Lodge,
would find me, unless

I shouldn't happen to be at any of them.

"My name is the same at all.

"F. C. B."

"Garrick Club,

"Oct. 16, 1872.

"My dear Mrs. Frith,

"Arthur Blunt is my witness to the fact that I *did* refuse for Sunday past; and I certainly read the letter at least twice. When that invitation came I was free as the birds of the air; since then I have been taken in the snare. Alas! that it should be so; but so 'tis. Red or white and Brown is your player—no, I mean Jones is your player. No, on second thoughts, Irving is your player to-night at the Lyceum, which I trust you will enjoy half as

much as I did the jolly evening when I celebrated my first visit to Pembridge Castle.

"*Au plaisir*, as our lively neighbours say. I remain, with best regards to all,

"Yours truly,

"F. C. BURNAND."

The following was written on "memorandum" paper:

"*From*
"F. C. BURNAND,
"Hale Lodge,
"Edgware.

"*To*
"MRS. FRITH.

"Nov. 4, 1872.

"MY DEAR MRS. FRITH,

"10,000,000 apologies for writing to you on this scrap, but my note-paper, ordered on Saturday, has not yet made its appearance here.

"On inquiring for a single sheet, I find that no one in the house has anything of the sort, except the cook, and hers is pink, with fancy edges in green. This would be too much for you. I am very sorry I can't manage Friday. I *am* right this time, and I am alluding to next Friday, 8th November, 1872; and now I'll refer to your letter once again. Yes, I *am* right, and being right am sorry. My kind regards to all gathered round the board of green cloth. Take care of your pockets. Shirley is writing something about 'Punch and Lunch.' I was looking at the 'Derby Day' at Kensington;

what a mess they made in attempting to represent it at the Holborn in the 'Flying Scud'!"

The last paragraph in my friend's memorandum reminds me that three of my pictures, namely, "Claude Duval" (in a piece of Burnand's), the "Railway Station," and the "Derby Day," have been represented, *en tableaux vivants*, on the stage, with a result in each case woefully disappointing to me.

Wilkie's "Rent Day" was said to have inspired the play of that name by Douglas Jerrold; however that may have been, it is certain that the famous picture was represented by living figures on the stage at a special moment during the performance of the piece. Mulready, always Wilkie's intimate friend, told me of the glee with which the artist informed him of the compliment to be paid to his picture.

"'We'll just go together the first night, ye know; I've been at the playhouse putting the people in the positions, and it's just wonderfully like ma pacture.'"

The two painters secured central places in the dress-circle; the curtain was drawn up, and an exact representation of the picture disclosed.

"Not only," said Mulready to me, "did they get the groups right, but they had managed to select people really like those in the picture. I was delighted," said he; "and turning to Wilkie to express my pleasure, I saw the tears running down his face. What's the matter? Why, it's admirable! Surely you are satisfied?'

"'Wall, ye see,' said Wilkie, 'I feel it's such an

honour; it's just quite overcome me to think that a pacture of mine should be treated like that; and did ye hear how the people clapped, man? It's varra gratifying!'"

I could have cried when I saw the "Railway Station," but from a very different cause.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MORE PEOPLE WHOM I HAVE KNOWN.

In speaking of the pleasure of seeing one's name in print, Haydon in a lecture which I heard him deliver added, that we "should probably live to see it far too often in connection with remarks the reverse of agreeable." I have had frequent experience of the truth of this at the time I was foolish enough to read art criticism. When I contemplated speaking of "People I have Known," in my former volumes, I had some qualms regarding the good taste, and even the propriety, of the proceeding as regards persons still living. It also occurred to me that the introduction of certain eminent names had the aspect of boasting of distinguished acquaintances and friends. Except in one instance, I have met with no abuse for my conduct; and in others, I am glad to say, I have received letters, and *vivâ voce* expressions of thanks that have surprised me; giving me assurance, as they did, of the importance of being named with commendation by a writer whose praise I really think of little value. One person—an artist of great promise and not inconsiderable performance—

thanked me with extreme warmth, "for now," said he, "my friends will no longer object to my being an artist."

I look upon this as another proof of the value people put upon printed opinion. I feel persuaded I might have talked to that gentleman's friends for an hour without producing the effect that a few printed words have accomplished.

Then there are the names of eminent persons with whom I am, or have been, acquainted, which escaped my memory as I was writing! I have already referred to an anonymous complainant; of course, so long as that lady or gentleman perseveres in anonymity I cannot redress the wrong, if it is one; but in the case of perhaps the most eminent lady artist that this country has produced—namely, Mrs. Carpenter—I have been very properly roused from my forgetfulness by a letter from her daughter. In speaking of lady artists, how I could forget the name of Mrs. Carpenter can only be excused, if at all, on the ground of her having died many years ago, leaving a name not nearly so familiar as it deserves to be to the present generation.

I can see no objection to quoting from Miss Carpenter's letter, for I agree with every word of it. She says she has read my "Reminiscences," "and felt much surprised not to see any mention of my dear mother. She cannot be undistinguished, having pictures at the National Portrait Gallery, South Kensington; four half-lengths of judges, and one archbishop at Eton College, some at the Provost's

Lodge, etc. Two of the judges—Patterson and Coleridge—were engraved by S. Cousins, R.A., for the Law Society, and I have heard you myself say how much you admired her portraits. Also, I remember Mr. Leslie thanking her for sending such a beautiful picture as her portrait of Lady Lovelace, only daughter of Lord Byron, to ornament their walls at the R.A., he being that year one of the hangers. My friends are asking why Mr. Frith has not mentioned her, and as I cannot properly answer that question, I trouble you with this note, that I may know what your reason is."

I made my peace, I hope, by a private letter to Miss Carpenter, pleading the truth—forgetfulness—of which I am ashamed.

The ranks of the Royal Academy are, and always have been, open to women, and why Mrs. Carpenter was never able to write R.A. after her name is a mystery to me, for she far surpassed in merit most of her contemporary portrait-painters. I well remember her portrait of Lord Coleridge, which was a really fine work, possessing qualities which are rarely seen in modern portraiture. Though I maintain that artists are, as a body, full of generous appreciation of each other's work, and free, as a rule, from "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness," we have had amongst us—and perhaps still have—the exception that proves the rule. An old R.A., himself a successful portrait-painter, was exceedingly jealous of success in others. At one time he lived next door to a young and rising portrait-painter. I

have seen him shake with agitation when the loud rat-tat of a footman has announced the arrival of a sitter next door. On a special occasion, when I had called upon him, he rushed to his window, and calling to me, said :

"Look there! That's the kind of thing all day long. See that carriage? Thank God it's a lady he has got to paint this time ; he can't paint a man properly, but when he attempts a woman ! Do you recollect that awful woman he had in the Exhibition last year?" etc.

Someone told Mrs. Carpenter that this gentleman always spoke of her as his "fair rival."

"Does he ?" said the lady ; "well, I consider him my *un*fair rival."

I think I am well within the truth when I say that the praise artists value most is that which they receive from their brethren of the brush. Being in my infancy as a writer, I am only able to apply the same observation to my own experience in that capacity when I declare that the approval of my previous literary effort has been most gratifying to me when it has reached me from writers of acknowledged fame ; though I hope I am not ungrateful for that which came in such abundance from other quarters. Modesty prevents my quoting from a letter received from Mrs. Lynn Linton, but candour compels me to acknowledge that I read it with shame, as its perusal reminded me that I had forgotten to include that lady's honoured name amongst those of "People I have Known." I trust my

reader will not imagine that my attention was drawn to this strange forgetfulness by Mrs. Lynn Linton herself. Standing as she does at the very top of her profession, she needs no eulogy from me; but I may publicly boast of her as an acquaintance, and, I hope, a friend, with whom I have been intimate through her delightful novels for more years than I should care to enumerate. As I am on my knees, I may as well confess to another disgraceful piece of forgetfulness. Anstey Guthrie, author of "Vice Versâ," "The Fallen Idol," and other admirably humorous works, was a fellow-student at Cambridge with one of my sons, and joint contributor with him to a Cambridge paper, in which I believe the first chapters of "Vice Versâ" were published. I have had the pleasure of intimacy with Guthrie since his—quite recent—student days, and I was one of the first to recognise the rare powers which have since been universally acknowledged. I hope I am not betraying a "secret of the prison-house" when I say that the inimitable papers called "Lessons for Young Reciters," lately published in *Punch*, are the productions of my friend. I confess myself to be one of those who believe the possession of real humour to be one of the rarest gifts; and that Guthrie has it, is proved continually in his work. Whether what I am now writing will ever experience the glare of publicity I know not, but if it should, one of the advantages to myself will be that I am able to record, though tardily, the name of Anstey Guthrie amongst my *newest* friends

—that I shall live to find him an *old* one I hope; but the years, which should be years of discretion, at which I have arrived, teach me that there is little prospect of our friendship being put to the test of a very lengthened time.

The name of Amelia B. Edwards is one that is familiar as an admirable writer of fiction; it also represents a lady with whom I can boast of an acquaintance, though some years have passed since we met. I have derived so much pleasure from that lady's books that I should be ungrateful if I did not place the writer prominently amongst the "People I have Known." I possess some interesting letters by Miss Edwards, which will be found elsewhere, as I have obtained the writer's permission to publish them. I venture to recommend Miss Edwards' novel called "Barbara's History" to anyone who doubts the authoress's right to be placed very high in the ranks of novelists. A reading of that book will dispel any such doubts.

In common with many of my fellow-creatures, I suffer from an infirmity which is often productive of disagreeable and embarrassing consequences. In the course of a long life I have made acquaintance, —often extending no further than an introduction— with a great many people, but unless my new friend possessed a speciality, the result of eminence in some form, or he happened to be marked by a striking personal peculiarity, the impression he made upon me passed so completely away that I invariably failed to recognise him a second time; or if I re-

membered the face, I could not, for the life of me, say to whom it belonged. Then followed moments of much embarrassment. With all my might I tried to remember the gentleman or lady, always with such emphasis as if present and future comfort depended upon the reply.

In my early experience of these troubles, I used to cut the knot by declaring my inability to remember the speaker, expressing my regret, and so on; but I soon found that my forgetfulness was considered ill-bred, and resented accordingly. What right had I to forget a person who so easily remembered me?

I now adopt a different method; and when a gentleman who, to the best of my belief, I have never till that instant set eyes upon, comes to me with the usual salutation, "How *are* you? 'Tis a long time since we met," I affect to know him well; and sometimes, in the course of a few moments' talk, a remark may be made—perhaps about a mutual friend—or enlightenment may arise from some trifling allusion. Then the sense of relief is delightful; my friend's name is at my tongue's end, ready for use if required.

That my present method is not free from misfortune, the following little example of it will prove. At the private view of the Royal Academy Old Masters a year or two ago, a gentleman came to me, whose face I recognised; and, after the common salutation, he said:

"You know Mrs. Gibbons, I think" (naming the

widow of my old friend and patron). "I am told she has a splendid collection of pictures. Do you think she would allow me to see them?"

"Well, really," said I, making desperate attempts to remember who my questioner was, "I can hardly say. Mrs. Gibbons, I am sorry to say, is rather an invalid. Still, perhaps she might——"

"Oh! well, then," interrupted the gentleman, "would you kindly give me a note of introduction? I have an engagement—rather in a hurry now. I am stopping at Morley's Hotel, Trafalgar Square. Please send me a line of introduction there, will you? Thank you. Good-morning!"

My friend left the Gallery, but I need scarcely say he did not receive a letter from me; and if he should by chance read these pages, he will learn the reason why.

I have acknowledged that if by good fortune I am honoured by an introduction to a person of eminence, the face and figure of the celebrity make an indelible impression upon me. That being so, I am not likely to forget that I was once presented to James Sheridan Knowles, author of "Virginius," "The Hunchback," and many other plays extremely popular in my young days. Knowles's son was a fellow-pupil with me at Sass's more than fifty years ago. He was a fine young fellow, with a tremendous admiration for his father's plays, which he told us were always written out of doors—often in the Regent's Park—and on SLATES—I presume for

facility of erasure, previous to their being produced in a permanent form.

Sheridan Knowles was an actor as well as an author. Before my introduction to him, I had seen him in his own play of "The Wife: a Tale of Mantua." He played an Italian—named Pierre, I think—with a broad Irish accent. The part was one for the display of strong passion; and the stronger became the situation, the more evident became the brogue. Knowles's square, powerful figure, with his fine expressive face, made such an impression upon me, that I believe I could recognise him now.

He was a sharer with my less distinguished self in the failure of memory that I have alluded to—even to a greater degree than myself, if the following, and other stories to a like effect, are true.

It is said that Knowles was talking to a friend in the street, when a gentleman came up to him, and exclaimed, in rather an abrupt, and even angry, manner:

"Why did you not keep your promise to dine with us last Thursday, Mr. Knowles? It was a distinct engagement made between you and me. You kept the rest of the company waiting for nearly an hour. It is really too——"

"Me boy," said Knowles, "ye don't know how vexed I am. No, I did not forget ye. Ask Mrs. Knowles if ye don't believe me. I was ill, me boy; but it's thankful I am to say I am better now. Give

me another chance. Name your own time. Any day next week."

"You really will? Well, say Thursday again; and you will not fail us? Same hour—six. Will that suit you?"

"Perfectly. Oh, ye may depend upon me, never fear! I'll be to the fore that day."

With a hand-shake to Knowles and a bow to his friend, the would-be host walked away. Knowles looked after him, lost in thought, till he disappeared.

"That man's face is familiar to me! Do you know who he is?" said the author to his friend.

"No; I don't," said the friend.

"Devil take me if I do, either," said Knowles.

Taking the phrase "people I have known" literally, I can claim a place for Sheridan Knowles amongst the number; but as less than five minutes would have been required to erase my image from his mind, it would be too much to expect the great author to admit my claim.

With another playwright, Tom Robertson, I am safe when I name him amongst people I have known, and also as one of my dearest friends; and if measureless delight imparted to thousands upon thousands of people gives rise, as it should, to feelings of gratitude, what a host of friends must Robertson possess!

An attempt to borrow, or to buy, some pieces of costume took me one night to the little theatre in Queen Street, Tottenham Court Road, afterwards

called the Prince of Wales's. A play was being acted called "Society." The author was unknown to me even by name. I can well remember the surprise and pleasure with which I listened to "Society;" and with the conviction that the author had struck a new vein sure to be greatly reproductive, I spoke to a literary friend, giving my opinion, and asking for his own. "Rubbish, my dear F.—rubbish! Nothing to come out of that chap." A curious instance of the fallibility of contemporary judgment, as the long succession of admirable pieces from Robertson's pen sufficiently proves. All the world knows these plays; but few people in it knew the author better than I did, or liked him more.

Robertson's early life had been rough in the extreme. One of a family of actors, and almost born upon the stage, scarcely a privation incident to the life of the struggling actor had not been borne by Robertson. By his own admission he had no ability as an actor; he came of a large and, as he used to say, *disunited* family, which it was sometimes so hard to feed, that the embryo author had occasionally to dine off his pipe. This I have heard him declare more than once. Success came at last; but it came to a soured man in ill-health, and addicted to cynicism bred of long-continued suffering and disappointment. This created a manner somewhat abrupt and unpleasant; but the manner was only skin-deep, and beneath it lay a good heart, and a generous and sympathetic nature. Robertson's success provoked

many of the critics, who attacked him with great severity. A series of articles in a prominent weekly paper, signed P., were especially cruel and unjust. When the play of "School" was produced, a journal —which shall be nameless—indulged in a series of observations easy of contradiction and disproof, and evidently intended to taunt Robertson into replying. He showed them to me as examples of "the liberty of the press."

"Why," said I, "all this is so false and so easy of disproof, that I can't understand your allowing it to go uncontradicted?"

"*I* contradict the ruffians!" said the author. "I'll see them —— first! *Let the brutes howl!* what care I?"

Though still a young man, it was easy—as it was most painful—to see that his days were numbered; disease of the heart had seized him, making his life —as he said—a burden to him. I spent many an hour with him at Ramsgate, where we had both gone for our summer holiday—he with his pleasant wife and family; I with mine. He was fond of talking of a new play that he had "upon the stocks," in which an artist was intended to be a principal character. He consulted me about certain professional details necessary for the true presentation of his painter, and he told me his plot and intended incidents—alas! for the frailness of memory, I have forgotten them all. The play was never completed; indeed, whether it existed at all upon paper I doubt, but that it was clearly in the author's mind I had

sufficient proof. He got gradually worse, and returned home to die.

I saw him once after his return, and though the hand of Death was plainly upon him, he was still eager about his intended play; making me repeat artistic details that he feared he had not completely mastered. It was painful to listen to him, and as I left him I felt—but too truly—that I should never see him again. Though, during my acquaintance with Robertson, he was always more or less suffering, there were gleams of humour and true observation of men and things which, if occasionally sarcastic, still strongly marked his conversation, and were very amusing, as the following anecdote proves. I cannot vouch for its truth, but I tell the tale as it was told to me, and from internal evidence I think it may be accepted:

A friend—a well-known wine-merchant—called to see the sick man, and found him in one of the terrible paroxysms of his disorder. The visitor was about to withdraw, when Robertson waved him to a seat, saying in tremulous tones: "No, don't go—sit down—I shall be better soon!" The guest took a seat. A bottle of wine was on the table. Presently the sick man said: "Help yourself; take a glass of sherry, it won't hurt you—it isn't your own!"

Whether Robertson would have surpassed himself and struck a deeper chord in human nature than any to be found in "Caste," "Ours," etc., it is now idle to speculate; from my knowledge of the man, I

believe he would; but as it is, I feel I owe him a debt of gratitude for many hours of enjoyment; and I believe there are vast numbers of my fellow-creatures who join with me in this acknowledgment, and in sincere regret at my gifted friend's untimely death.

In one of the best actresses at present on the English stage—Mrs. Kendal—most of my readers are aware that they have a sister of Tom Robertson. I name that lady amongst people I have known, both in public and in private, though I am sorry to say my acquaintance in the latter condition is limited to one or two meetings in society, when I found Mrs. Kendal to be as bright, pleasant, and intelligent, as anyone who had seen her on the stage might be sure she would be. In certain characters, I think it would be impossible to surpass Mrs. Kendal, and she must forgive my telling those who are unaware of it, that I know of instances on her part of the open-handed charity that is so often found amongst her sister and brother actors, which would also be difficult to surpass.

I have often cause to complain of my memory, and never with more justice than when I have to confess that I forgot to name Thomas Hardy amongst people I have known. The author of "Far from the Madding Crowd," "Under the Greenwood Tree," "The Hand of Ethelberta," "The Trumpet Major," and many other novels, is a man of whose friendship anyone might be proud; and few could be so ungrateful and stupid as to

forget. Amongst the multitude of Mr. Hardy's admirers, there is not one more sympathizing and more genuine than the present writer. For absolute truth to nature and a far sight into the depths of the human heart, together with a power of description of the beauties of flood and field, no living English author can surpass my friend; and these powers are acknowledged everywhere with such uncommon unanimity, that I seem only to echo public opinion. I think it is not too much to say of some of his peasant characters—notably of the conversation of those worthies—that Shakespeare himself could scarcely surpass the Dorsetshire writer. Mr. Hardy is still a young man, or what from my standpoint I consider such. He is now his own rival, whom I sincerely hope he will live to throw into shade. And now, having set my friend a task of extreme difficulty, I will close my supplementary list of people I have known with the name of Robert Browning. In accordance with my determination to publish no correspondence without the sanction of the writer, I sent some letters received from the poet for the required approval; he tells me he returned them with his permission for their publication. Alas! they were lost—or stolen—in their transmission by post, and I am denied the opportunity of showing to my readers that I enjoy the enviable honour of the friendship of a man whose fame speaks trumpet-tongued throughout the civilized world.

Thieves of autographs and letters, I can forgive

you anything but this last robbery! I have waited till the last moment in the hope that the criminal heart might be softened and my letters sent to me. I now give up all hope; and nothing remains for me but to make my bow to the readers of my "Reminiscences;" and with warmest thanks to those who have done me the honour of wading through my third volume, I bid them a respectful and a loving FAREWELL.

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